

good fortune. While wandering in a forest seeking the way to the place of which he had been told, he noticed a snake climbing up a tree to devour the young ones of a vulture which had made its nest there. He killed the snake, and saved the lives of the young birds, and having no other place of lodging he lay down for the night beneath the tree. When the parent birds came back to their nest with food, in the evening, they were told by the young vultures of the great deliverance that they owed to the young man lying below. The old birds thanked him very heartily and asked if they could be of any service to him. He told them his story and then the vultures offered to carry him over the seas to arouse his luck, and bring him back again on the wings. Before they started, a certain tree standing near that spot requested him to find out from his luck the cause of its being withered, and to inform it on his return. The birds fulfilled the promise, and carried him to the country where his fortune lay. He aroused it and asked it to help him. First of all he very unselfishly enquired why the tree was withering. His fortune told him it was because of a serpent hidden under its roots guarding a great treasure which was buried there. He



must kill the serpent and then the tree would recover and he would gain possession of the gold and jewels. He was conveyed back over the seven seas by the vultures, and returning to the forest he found the treasure and appropriated it. The tree also became green as had been foretold. On his way home he caught and tamed a beautiful horse that was running wild, and continued his journey on its back. Coming to the dominions of a certain king, he found the place in gloom owing to the serious illness of the king's favourite daughter. All efforts of the royal physicians had failed and the king was offering huge reward to any one who could cure her. The young man recommended some simple remedy that he had learnt in his native village, and by good luck the girl rapidly recovered. The king was so grateful that he offered to make him his son-in-law and gave him rich rewards. So at length he reached home with great wealth and honour owing to the awakening of his good fortune.

We see, curiously illustrated in the above story, the materialising character of popular religious thought, which here conceives of the karma or destiny, a man's past acts in former lives, as a person who can go to sleep and requires to be



awakened. The notion of treasures being guarded by serpents is exceedingly common and is probably to be ascribed to the fact of snakes making their dwellings under the ground. In the Volsunga Saga a great treasure was guarded by the serpent Fafner who was slain by Sigurd.

3. THE PRECIOUS COUNSEL

A certain rich man had two sons, and when they grew up he gave them each a sum of Rs.4,000 to start business with. The elder son went into trade, but the younger one bought with the money four pieces of advice from a celebrated Faqir. These were: (1) Never to walk or travel alone, (2) Not to sit on any bed before examining it, (3) To remain awake in time of danger, and (4) To suppress anger. He made up his mind to abide carefully by these rules, for which he had paid so highly, and set off on his travels. In accordance with the first rule, as he had no one else to take with him, he picked up a crab from a pool by the wayside and kept it in his cap. Arriving at a certain place he ate his food and lay down to sleep. While he slept a cobra came and was about to bite his head, when the crab attacked it. A fight ensued, the noise of which awoke the sleeper, and he killed the snake. Thus he found



the value of the first counsel, that had been given to him by the holy man. It had cost him a thousand rupees, but it had saved his life. He continued his journey, and as night fell he came to a house in which lived a beautiful but wicked woman. She received him hospitably, and after feasting him with the best, showed him a richly covered bed on which he was to sleep. Before lying down, however, he remembered the second rule, and looked under the bed. To his horror he saw that it was placed over a deep and dark ditch. Thus having discovered the evil intentions of the woman, he promptly killed her and took possession of all her property. Congratulating himself on the good results of following the Faqir's advice, he pursued his journey and came to a city. He found lodging in the house of an old widow. She told him that he was welcome to stay in her house, but that, unhappily, that very night it was the turn of her son to be devoured by a demon. Inquiring into this strange story, he was told that the demon had taken up its abode within the body of the king's daughter in the form of a snake. It would have devoured the princess long ago, and perhaps the king and all his courtiers, if they had not arranged to supply it with a



man every night to satisfy its appetite. The snake issued from the mouth of the princess at night, and assuming gigantic human countenance, ate up the victim provided. On hearing this ghastly story the young man was in no wise afraid, but confiding in the third rule which had been given him by the Faqir, he offered to take the place of the widow's son. She was only too glad to allow him to do so, and he repaired to the palace. He asked for a dozen lamps to be placed around him, and seated himself, sword in hand, in the princess's apartment. He took care to keep awake all the time. At last the demon appeared and began to put out the lamps. When it was just about to existinguish the last one the young man started up and slew it with his sword. He still remained awake watching all sides of the room, but nothing further happened. The king and his courtiers were delighted to find the demon killed and the princess delivered from the demon. The king married the man to the princess and gave him much wealth. Some time after he returned to his original home to tell his first wife and other relatives of all his good fortune. Many years had passed, the wife had borne a son who was now grown up, and who came forth along with his



mother to greet him. Seeing the young man there in company of his wife, and not knowing who he was, the father at first flew into a rage and was about to strike him dead, but remembering the fourth counsel, he kept quiet, and on learning that this was his son, he rejoiced more than all at this last proof of the value of the sage's advice.

4. THE THREE FOOLS

Three fools, while roving together in a jungle, met with a lake full of beautiful fishes. Seeing this, one expressed his regret and asked how would these poor fishes survive if a wild fire were to beset the body of water. The other clown rejoined, "Oh, it was an easy thing for them (the fishes) to climb up trees if such a catastrophe should ever come to them by chance." The third idiot, contradicting his companion, said, that the fishes were not buffaloes which could mount the trees. They then departed, after making their respective observations on the place they had come across.

5. THE SAGACIOUS DOG

A certain man, who owed Rs.300 to a creditor, had nothing to discharge his debt with except a dog which he had trained to watch his house. On being pressed by the creditor for repayment



of his loan, the poor man gave his dog as a pledge for three years. The rich man took the dog with him and went away. One night when the rich man was away from his house some thieves came. In spite of the alarm given by the dog in barking at them, no one awoke from sleep to detect and arrest them. Thus unguarded, the pilferers found opportunity of entering the house and taking away the riches from it. They concealed the booty in a deep ditch in a neighbouring jungle. The dog, unable to do anything to prevent their doing so, silently noted their movement. On the next day when the master of the house came home the dog frequently fawned at his feet and made signs to go somewhere. On noticing the conduct of the dog the master followed the animal, which took him to the trench, where he found the stolen property. He then took his riches home. He was so glad to recover his property through the sagacity of the dog that he wrote a letter to his debtor acknowledging the discharge of his loan through his dog, which he returned with many thanks to him. The dog returned to his former master with the letter hanging on his neck. The master of the house, seeing the dog returning home in breach of his pledge, shot him down. He found



then the letter on his body, which he read to his never-ceasing sorrow, and afterwards he committed suicide through grief.

6. A SENSELESS FOOL

A fool once shaved his head (an inauspicious omen performed only on the death of one's own near and dear kinsman), when his she-buffalo gave birth to a male young one. The universal custom is to get such a calf bathed in cold water as soon as it is born. The man thrust the head of the young calf into a wooden vessel full of water for the purpose. When he wanted to take the head out of the utensil he could not do so: he devised a plan to effect his purpose. With a sword he severed the head of the calf from its body. Then the beheaded portion would not come out of it. He was then obliged to break the vessel. The last business might have been done before, to save the young one and the wooden vessel, if the man had had any sense.

7. A VILLAGE WISEACRE

There was once a certain man in an out-of-the-way village. The man being a Padhan (headman) pretended to be philosopher and a man of wisdom. He used to be resorted to for advice in



every case which the other residents of the village did not understand themselves.

Once a certain man of the village found the outer frame of a sieve, and being himself ignorant of what it was, took it to the leading man for examination. The man after carefully inspecting it drew his conclusion and said, " My friend, this is nothing but the frame or disc of the moon. Once the sun and the moon fought together and the latter on being vanquished got his ring broken and it fell down on the earth. You see it has been eaten into by insects."

At another time a certain inhabitant of the village reported to the philosopher that his crops were damaged or eaten by some animal with extraordinary large feet, and requested him to find out what it was. The so-called philosopher went himself to inspect the damage and the tracks of the feet of the animal which had damaged the fields. On examining the same, he inferred that it was some deer, which after fastening the mill-stones to its feet, seems to have trodden on and marked the fields. Going a little further he and the others accompanying him, saw an elephant asleep there. This the so-called philosopher deduced to be nothing but either concentrated



darkness of the night (or vapour of the night after the sunset), or the one of Delhi (referring to an elephant which he had seen years ago in that city).

8. THE DEBTOR BORROWS WITH CHEERFULNESS BUT REPAYS WITH SORROW

The Kauravas and the Pandavas are the chief characters of the Sanskrit poem of the Mahabharat. One half of the ancient Delhi kingdom belonged to one, and the other half to the other. The latter five brothers after having undergone the punishment of 13 years, claimed to have their half of the kingdom, but the former declined to give them their share. The Pandavas were thus obliged to have resort to a battle, in which all the kings of India had joined for help on both sides. The Kauravas, who were already in possession of the kingdom, had money enough to defray the expenses of such a great war as it was, but the Pandavas, having just finished the time of their banishment or sojourn, had nothing to cope with the expenses of such a great war. As nothing less than trillions of money was necessary for the purpose, the eldest brother of the Pandavas, Yudhisthar, had recourse to Kuver, the treasurer of the gods, and deputed his youngest brother to



go to him, to ask for a loan of trillions of rupees for the war. Kuver asked the young Pandava whether he would repay the money with the same glad humour with which he wanted to borrow. "The same disposition," was the reply. On this Kuver declined to lend him any money. Yudhisthar was very sorry to hear of the refusal of Kuver, and sent then his fourth brother for the loan to Kuver, who, after having received the same answer to his question, did not agree to lend him any money. Yudhisthar then sent his second and third brother one after the other; they also brought the same flat refusal from Kuver, owing to his having received the same answer to the question put to them. Then Yudhisthar went himself for the loan to Kuver, who put him the same question, in answer to which Yudhisthar said, "Dear Sir, it is next to an impossibility for a debtor to discharge his debt with the same cheerfulness with which he borrows the money. He borrows with a glad heart, but repays it with sorrow and regret". This answer satisfied Kuver, who allowed Yudhisthar to take any amount of money that he might be in want of, and considered him to be a truthful man, and certain to repay him the money which he was then borrowing.



9. WONDERFUL FEATS OF TWO ASCETICS

In former times, Dervishes were totally devoted to God and his service, being quite indifferent to the world and worldly things. So they were endowed with supernatural power to work out wonders. Some four hundred years ago a Fakir by name Hardwarpuri went to try another ascetic by name Shravan Nath, at Hardwar, as to the power of his devotion. So he repaired to his house and asked his disciples to fill his vessel of only one chatak in capacity with oil. They came with a vessel of oil to accede to his prayer. Seers, nay, jars of oil were poured into it, but it was not filled. The news reached Shravan Nath, who himself came with a small reedful of oil, and began to fill the utensil up with it; yet it was not filled up, nor did the pouring stream of oil cease to fall into the vessel incessantly for three days and nights. The performance of these wonderful feats brought both of them into close communion with each other.

It was a rule with Shravan Nath to feed thousands of ascetics and Brahmins during the Hardwar fairs. Once, while doing so, he ran short of ghee (clarified butter in which cakes are fried) and it



was not to be had in the bazar; so the saint ordered his servants to borrow 100 jars of ghee from the Ganges. His servants filled 100 jars of the Ganges water in place of ghee. This water baked the cakes like the ghee, to the amazement of the cooks and other people present there on that occasion. After the fair was over the ascetic ordered 100 jars of ghee to be purchased and poured into the Ganges as a repayment of the ghee borrowed from the Ganges.

10. A FAQIR ALONE CAN JUDGE THE MERIT
OF ANOTHER FAQIR

A Fakir is discerned and judged only by another Fakir in regard to the nature of his devotion. It was during the reign of a certain Mohammadan ruler that a common Mohammadan dervish by name Alam Shah used to live in one of the suburbs of Delhi. He used to beg cooked food from door to door, and live in a hut thatched with leaves and grass. He had nothing but a cow, which he used to tether and drink her milk in the same way as her own calf did. He was said to be very fond of playing with the boys to whom he was wont to teach Persian and Arabic, in which languages he was a thorough scholar. He was not a well-known man, but seemed to be a common beggar and



known only to the people of the suburb. Years elapsed. He lived there in this way quite unnoticed, uncared for, and unregarded. Once upon a time another Mohammadan dervish by name Shutarbeg (who alone seemed to know the merit of Alam Shah) started from Arabia with a view to have some communion with Alam Shah about God and divine things. The former had sent a letter to the latter to this effect beforehand. He mounted and rode on a lion, with a bridle made of two living cobras, and travelled towards Delhi, to the utter astonishment of the people he met with. The nearer he approached Delhi the more widely the alarm spread and struck the people of the city with wonder and terror who did not fail to inform Alam Shah of the approach of the Arab ascetic. When the news came to Alam Shah that Shutarbeg was only at 2 miles distance, he was teaching boys on one of the walls of a house in ruins, and wanted to go ahead to receive him. The citizens of the city and suburb earnestly requested Alam Shah not to go to receive him on foot, but to ride either on an elephant, a pony, or a chariot of theirs. On this Alam Shah said that he wanted nothing of the sort for his vehicle, but directed the wall on which he and his boys sat,



to take him to the foreign ascetic. The said wall, under his order, began to move like an animate thing along the road by which the Arabian faqir was coming. They met, one showing the other the merit of his own devotion. The former brought the latter to his own hut, tying his lion with his own cow. They remained together for many weeks. At last when the foreign ascetic was ready to depart he found his lion had disappeared, and asked the Delhi faqir for it. In reply to his query he said that it was consigned by him to the care of his cow, so he should ask the cow for it. The other fakir accordingly asked the cow for his lion, which she vomited up, to the amazement of the Arabian fakir, and the other people assembled there. The foreign fakir after having mounted his lion departed. The Delhi fakir also disappeared with his cow the very next day.

II. FAITH IN GOD'S BOUNTY

There were two brothers in a certain family, both of whom were married, and used to live separately from each other. The elder was very diligent, and always devoted his time to work, but the younger one being very lazy used to do nothing but sleep and otherwise idle away his



time. His wife was very angry with the conduct of her husband, and not unfrequently she used to taunt him with his slothfulness. Her husband when so tasked and worried in this way used to say, that if God was ever pleased with him he would send wealth and riches inside his house himself, by breaking open his roof. One day his wife, while grazing her cattle in the jungle, found some clue of a jar full of gold mohars buried there. She instantly covered it with grass and earth so that no one else might detect it, with a view to take it at night, and requested her husband to help her to convey the money home. The husband still insisted on God's sending it himself inside his home, and said that he would not act like a thief to get the riches. As she could not prevail on him any further, she was at last obliged to share it with her elder sister-in-law (the wife of the elder brother) and told her the happy news. The latter, having made herself fully aware of the whereabouts of the alleged wealth, refused to accompany her, saying that she would not risk her life by going there at night, but, cunningly, she thought in her mind that she and her husband would go there alone and appropriate the whole of it themselves. After this, when she found her



younger sister asleep together with her husband she took her own husband with her and repaired to the jungle where the riches were said to have been buried. As soon as they arrived at the spot they began to unearth the jar of gold, but no sooner was this done by them than numbers of hornets assailed and stung them. This prevented them from further digging the place for the money. They thought that they were imposed on by their relation to be thus troubled and killed by the means invented for the purpose. In their rage they thought of revenging themselves on them (the younger brother and his wife) for their enmity by throwing the jar of wasps or hornets itself into the chimney hole of their house as a return for the injury. They did accordingly. As the hornets had already flown out of the jar, the gold mohars which it still retained were poured into the room wherein the younger brother and his wife had slept. On seeing the heap of gold mohars inside his house the younger brother cried out, "Lo, God is pleased with me now, and so He has thrown riches inside my house Himself, by having the roof of his house broken open for the purpose". So the confidence of the younger brother in the goodwill of God was justified.



12. THE IMPATIENT CREDITOR

Creditors or money-lenders, in the pre-British times, were considered and treated by their debtors as their exclusive lords and despotic masters, as next to the reigning king. A creditor's appropriation of any of the moveables pertaining to his debtors, even without their consent, was quite tolerated. He could swear his debtor not to eat any of his meals or come out of his house, or could shut him up inside his house, or kindle fire on the threshold of his door, unless or until the loan was repaid. Moreover, he could take the sons or daughters of the borrower as slaves for himself, either for a time or for their whole lives. Thus the creditors were wont to go to their debtor's houses themselves for realization of their loans. The presence of a creditor had a stunning effect on the debtor, if the latter was not in a position to discharge his debt.

Once a certain creditor went to the house of his debtor to ask for the repayment of his loan. The latter was not at home but his wife, being otherwise unable to repay the debt, had presence of mind to show him four large white pumpkins kept in her house, representing them to be the eggs given birth to by her mare, and promised him to



pay the debt as soon as the eggs were hatched, by selling the horses which should come from the eggs. The creditor trusted her word, and having himself become impatient to take the eggs in payment for his money, asked her to let him have them at once. The debtor's wife said, "Sir, the eggs when hatched would fetch not less than Rs.400 how can you take them in return for only Rs.100 of yours?" The creditor said, "I must have them now, otherwise I will charge you double interest". She yielded to this demand of her husband's creditor, and said, "Sir, you are master of our household, you can take them in lieu of your money, but they are not mature yet ; they are to be conveyed to your home very carefully by a path which runs along the tops of the mountains, on the bottom of a basket turned up, otherwise, they will rot on your way home". The impatient creditor observed these precautions, and started for his home, putting the eggs (pumpkins) on the other side of a basket, on his head. While he was thus conveying them over the tops of the mountains, all of them rolled down a precipice into a forest slope, where deer were grazing. The fall of the pumpkins startled the deer, and they ran away in alarm at the sight of the creditor, who was fully convinced



in his mind, that the deer were the horses born from the eggs which had been broken by the fall. The creditor arrived at his home in a disappointed mood, when his children flocked to him as usual, and asked their father where he had come from, and what he had brought for them. On his relating the whole story of his unsuccessful speculation and the loss of four valuable horses, one of his sons said eagerly that he would have gladly ridden one of them if his father had brought them home. Being already mortified by the unfortunate transaction, his son's foolish saying so provoked him to anger that he could not refrain from killing him.

13. A DERVISH'S WISE ADVICE

There was a Raja of a certain country, who used to feed a certain dervish constantly for some years, in his own palace. After the death of this king his son also made it a rule to place a dish of food before the ascetic with his own hand. One day no sooner was the plate of food laid before him by the prince than the Fakir began to weep and mourn over it. On the prince's enquiring the cause of his sadness the devotee said, "Oh my son, I am sorry to say that the courtiers of your father have conspired to



have you assassinated and your kingdom taken, so it behoves you now to leave this country at once, and go to a strange country. Take your money in gold, silver, and precious stones with you, and act on my exhortations and never forget them for a minute.

They are these :

1st—Rest or stay out of the way (not on any road).

2nd—Do not sit in the bed of another without thoroughly striking it before you do so.

3rd—One's sister is a sister during his prosperity.

4th—One's friend is a friend during his adversity.

The prince started taking his money. After travelling some distance he felt exhausted, and remembering the advice of the Fakir, wanted to rest in a place out of the way. After getting some refreshment there, he travelled on (leaving the bag of his money at the spot unwittingly). When he was at some distance from the place, he noticed the loss of his valuable bag, to his utter despair. He returned to the out-of-the-way place where he had left it. On finding his bag there he was very happy and thankful to the devotee for the invaluable



advice by which he was so immensely benefited. He again resumed his journey, and arrived in a secluded forest where a witch had placed a bed with a white sheet spread over it, apparently for the rest and refreshment of fatigued travellers, but with the secret intent of having them killed so that she might appropriate their property. This bed was placed over a deep ditch, so that the sojourner should go down to destruction as soon as he sat on it. The witch said, "Dear son, you are welcome, get yourself refreshed by reposing on this bed, and then take your meal, which I shall gladly get ready for you after a while." The prince again remembered the advice of the Fakir. As soon as he gave 2 or 3 strokes on it, the covering sheet sank down, and the deep hole became visible. The prince after having fully understood the treacherous purpose of the woman, slaughtered her there and then. Then he proceeded to a town where his own sister was married. He sent a message to her that he was waiting for her in a certain suburb of the town. His sister, considering him to be in a beggarly state, had not only paid no heed to him, but denied him to be her brother; a fact which the prince found to agree with the prophecy of the hermit. He then left the town and proceeded to



another place where he heard a friend of his was living. In order to try the advice of his admonisher he sent word to him also. He immediately came to the prince, and took him to his house with great courtesy and regard, and, placing all his property at his disposal, eagerly requested him to stay and live there. The prince after staying there for some days, repaired to another town where he was wedded to the daughter of the king of the country, who made the reins of his kingdom over to the young prince, his son-in-law. Having thus attained the princely office the prince after some years returned to his own country with a large army, and in all the splendour of a king with a view to take possession of his kingdom. While thus proceeding his sister came to welcome and receive him, but the king dealt with her as became a potentate. The prince thereafter continued to think of and remember his patron saint as long as he lived.

14. THE GODLY MAN IS AS MAD TO THE
WORLD AS THE WORDLY MAN
TO THE SOUL

A really religious man, who was quite unconcerned with wordly affairs, used to be nicknamed a "Mad Man" by the worldly people wherever he went. Being so despised and ridiculed in this



world he was at last forced to go and complain to God about the bad treatment he received at the hands of the unspiritual people. On this God instanced to him great and most renowned statesmen, politicians, warriors, and others of great capacities and qualifications who had eventually done nothing for their immortal soul after death, and all their deeds became of none effect. God said that the godly man was no doubt as mad to the world as were the worldly men to the soul. The pious man then returned home quite pleased and satisfied with his own behaviour, and thenceforward paid no regard to what the world said about him.

15. YOUR MAJESTY IS THE FOURTH FOOL

Once a certain king directed his minister to produce four fools before him. The official set out in search of them. While engaged in the expedition he noted a man going mounted on a pony with the packet of his luggage on his head. The minister taking him for a fool ordered him to accompany him. On going further he found a certain man distributing sweetmeats for the joy he felt on account of birth of a child to his long estranged wife, who had deserted him and gone to another man as a concubine many years since. The envoy took him also with him. With these



two aforesaid dunces the officer went to the king and presented them. Each of them was made to relate his doings to the monarch, who was quite satisfied with the deficiency of their reason. After this the king asked his minister, "Why do you bring only two fools instead of four as ordered?" "Sir, I am the 3rd fool, who instead of spending my valuable time in profitable and wise works, am squandering it in search of fools and idiots." The king then asked for the fourth, the administrator to this eager query of his replied, "My Lord, may I be excused from replying to this question?" The king insisted on a reply. The minister then said, "Your majesty is the fourth fool, who is so earnestly intent on finding out fools instead of wise men."

16. DISCERNMENT OF GOD OR GOD HELPS A RIGHTEOUS PERSON

Once upon a time, a certain hermit who was living in a secluded forest far off from human habitations felt a doubt as to Sri Krishna being an incarnation of God. He invariably heard from the people he met with, that the former had always sided with and helped the Pandavas against the Kauravas; a quality or disposition opposed to the



divine will. So once he set out from his hut in order to test the merit of the parties concerned. After having had his meal he went to the king of the Kauravas in the afternoon. He was welcomed and received by the king. The king asked, "Where have you come from?" The saint answered, "From Dwarka." The king again asked him, "What is Sri Krishna doing now-a-days?" The saint answered, "He has fixed a needle, in the opposite side, on the ground in an expansive lawn, and having himself mounted an elephant with his wives he goes backward and forward through its eye." The king hearing this story of the hermit, contemptuously laughed at him and said, "Oh man, you are not at all a godly man as you appear to be, but a liar and scoundrel; for you talk foolishly. You had better turn your face and go away, or else you will be thrown into prison to rot there for your life." Having patiently endured the abuse as a saint should, the hermit again begged to be allowed to present his request, and prayed the king, "Sir, you are lord of the world, you will be merciful to me and grant me a present of a cow. A son has recently been born to me, and I am obliged to have him fed with the milk of the cow." On this the king asked him, "What propitious day is this?"



and have you not already had your food?" The saint rejoined, "Oh lord of the earth, today is not a fast day, and I have taken my food already. But the urgency of the case has brought me here, for if my son does not get cow's milk today it is not unlikely that he may die without it." To this the king said, "You certainly deserve to be expelled from my court. The day on which you ask for a gift of a cow, is not a propitious day, the time is afternoon. Yourself and I have both had our food. All these things are opposed to the teaching of the Hindu scriptures. You must at once go home without any further discussion, or else you will be driven in disgrace out of this place. But you can come to me again in the early morning of some sacred day, fasting, and ask me for the gift of a cow." The saint then left the place and went to the king of the Pandavas, a couple of miles off, on the same day. On his arrival there he was received with great regard and reverence by the king who said, "Oh saint, you are heartily welcome. You have purified and blessed me and my country by your holy appearance. Where do you come from?" The saint answered, "From Dwarka." "What is Sri Krishna doing there now-a-days?" To this the saint gave the same reply as to the king of the



Kauravas. The king of the Pandavas was highly pleased with the reply, and said, "Though it is beyond the capacity of human conception, it is an easy thing for Almighty God, such as Sri Krishna himself is, to thrust the whole universe through the eye of a needle. Oh holy sage, have mercy upon me, if I can be of any service to you." The saint asked for a cow for the maintenance of his newly-born son. The king without any objection or scruple ordered a cow to be given to the saint, who selected one. While taking it home the entire herd of the kine began to follow or accompany it, in spite of the efforts of the herdsmen and other people to keep them back. When the report reached the king he ordered that the entire herd of the kine should be allowed to go with the sage. All these events brought the hermit to his senses, and he was thenceforward convinced in his mind that the Pandavas were the righteous people, and Sri Krishna was a true incarnation of God, ready to help and protect those who are virtuous and humble in spirit.

17. A SIMPLETON WHO FOLLOWED HIS
INSTRUCTIONS TOO LITERALLY

There was once a simpleton in a certain village. When ready to go to the house of his father-in-law



he asked his relations what to say to the members of his family. They instructed him to say "Yes" or "No" as the occasion might require. Accordingly he noted these words in his mind. Then he asked them what he should say to those who might meet him on the way. He was told to say "Good morning." With these directions impressed on his heart he started.

He reached a place where a fowler having concealed himself in a bush, had spread his net to catch birds. He met the simple man, just at the time when the birds were about to enter his net. No sooner did the dupe bid him good morning than the birds flew away, alarmed by his voice. The fowler being greatly enraged at his conduct inflicted a good beating on the fool, who exclaimed, "What am I to say then, instead of good morning?" The fowler instructed him to say "continue to come and be ensnared" (referring to his own desire to catch birds). Noting this instruction of the fowler the simpleton went on, and meeting thieves in the way he repeated the aforesaid speech to them. Of course on hearing such a sarcastic speech about their own profession, they also became very angry and gave a thrashing to the man. He happened to ask them, "Sirs, you beat me for what I said to you,



what am I to say then?" They replied telling him to say "Continue to bring and deposit" (referring to their own purpose). With this instruction of the thieves the simple man took his way. No sooner did he see men bearing a dead body (to be burnt) on their head, than he began to repeat the sentence told to him and was thereupon beaten by them for his abusive language. The simpleton asked them, "Friends what should I say then?" They said "Say, be not so always" (as the occasion required). With this instruction of theirs he went on. Sooner he saw a marriage procession coming, and he uttered the last mentioned sentence (be not so ever) and was again beaten by the people who formed the procession, because of this foolish and ominous saying. At last he arrived at the house of his father-in-law and was received with great regard and affection. His mother-in-law asked him, "Are you quite well?"

He says "Yes" (as originally tutored by his own kinsmen).

She asked again "Is my daughter well?"

He says "No."

She asks, "Is she sick"?

He says, "Yes".

She asks, "Is she not improving?"



He says "No."

She asks, "Is she dead"?

He says "Yes".

At this all the members of the family began to mourn over her. The wife of the simpleton was safe and alive, but it was only the instruction given to the idiot which caused all this pain and alarm.

18. IN THIS AGE ALL ARE SINNERS

When God created the world, the heavens and all the things therein, he divided infinite time into four ages: viz. first, the age of truth and innocence; second, three-fourth righteousness and one-fourth iniquity; third, half of righteousness, half of sin; fourth, made of entire sin. Along with other things he also provided 84 extensive hells for the occupation of sinners. Of course when first made they were wholly unoccupied. So God sent for the four ages and asked each of them to fill the hells. The first age came and expressed his inability to send even one person to the hells. The second on his appearance before God promised to send a few to the hells, but expressed his inability to fill them up. Then the third age made his appearance and promised to fill them to a certain extent but not up to their brim. After this the fourth age arrived, and after seeing the 84 large and wide hells uttered



a sigh, and humbly asked God, "My Lord, you know that I am the most powerful of all my colleagues and that to fill up thy hells to the top is nothing to me. They are hardly large enough to contain the multitudes of people whom I shall daily send to them. So let me have ten fold more space for them." This means that almost all the people of this age are sinners and deserve to be sent to hell.

19. A CRIPPLE FAVOURED BY LUCK

There was a man and his wife in a certain town who used to get their living by selling grass and fuel. Though very poor the pair were very anxious to have a son. At last they had a son born to them, who had no hands and feet. They nourished him with parental love and care. When he was full grown they became tired of him and grumbled at him, saying that they had to feed a son who was of no help to them, and the son used to reply to them that it was his own luck, and not his parents', which was feeding him. This invariable statement of his provoked them further. At last impelled by the ungratefulness of their son, they took him to a solitary jungle and left him there unprovided and uncared for, and returned to their home. On the evening of the same day the cows which were accustomed to graze in some neigh-



bouring jungle, instead of returning homeward, fled, in spite of the efforts of the cowherds to stop them, to the place where the limbless child had been laid by his parents. Thus the boy was brought to the notice of the cowherds by their cattle. Seeing him in this helpless state in the jungle, the herds kindled a fire near him, and fed him with their own hands before returning home with their kine. They did not forget to feed him in this way for months and years. One night, seeing flames of fire from a distance, a travelling saint, supposing the place (to be a habitation of men, went to the place) and saw the limbless boy with whom he stayed that night. Before his departure next morning, the sage asked him if there were any thing he wanted. The boy in reply said that nothing in the universe could help him except his own fate (formed of the consequence of his own doing in this and in the previous births) which he was obliged to endure, denying at the same time either the favour or disfavour of God, to the utter amazement of the godly saint. The saint then went straight to God and informed him of the boy's miserable state and his strong and firm belief in fate, against the power and influence of any God whatsoever. Then God came himself with the



saint to see the boy, and asked him whether he could do anything for him. The boy refused to accept his help, and relied on his own fate. But God having compassion on the boy made him a good looking boy, complete in all his limbs. But he not only did not acknowledge the mercy of God, but again ascribed his regeneration to his fate alone. He was after this married to the only daughter of the king of that country, who leaving his country to the boy (his son-in-law) went away to some jungle for penances and the purification of his soul. The boy, having thus become the king of the country, as a good son should, sent for his parents, who were still living on the proceeds of the sale of their grass and fire wood; gave them sufficient wealth and land to live like great people, and said to them openly that there was no occasion whatever for any blame, since fate reigns over every creature in the world.

20. A FAITHFUL WIFE WHO SAVED HER
HUSBAND FROM DEATH

There was a certain man who had no children at all. With a view to obtain a son he performed many penances and prayed to God for one. God granted him a son whose age was to be limited to 12 years. His parents proposed, when he attained



the age of 11 years, to marry him and to leave their home for good so that they might not see the death of their son before they themselves died. So the father started in search of a wife for his son. He arrived in a village where a certain man had daughters, who were conversing with each other about the manner in which each of them would treat her husband if she were married. The eldest said she would kill her husband and then go away from his house; the second said that she would always trouble her husband; the third said she would starve him; the fourth said that she would never obey him; the fifth and youngest one, remonstrating with her other sisters, said that she would never cease to love and obey her husband, with her heart and soul, and would save him even at the sacrifice of her own life. After hearing the fanciful proposals of the five sisters the man felt inclined to ask for the youngest sister for his son. He asked her father for the girl and she was married to his son. The nearer the term of 12 years approached the more anxious and miserable the parents felt. But the girl thought that she was the only cause of their anxiety and discomfiture. So one day she plainly asked them to let her go to her father's house, since they had become very unhappy since



her marriage to their son. Hearing such pleading they were obliged to disclose the secret of their imminent misfortune. Before the fatal night of her husband's death was to fall due she had a house built at the burning ghat (place where dead bodies are consumed) with four doors leading into it. On the evening of the predicted fatal night she took her husband there and seated him on a bed in the centre of it. At one door she placed a burning lamp as a guardian, and addressed it thus "Oh holy light, be vigilant in your duty, and do not allow any visible or invisible soul or spirit to enter this night, or else I will extinguish you from the face of the world for ever." At the second door she put a vessel of water as a watchman, and addressed him, "Oh holy water, the habitation of God, be attentive to your duty of forbidding entrance into the house to any perceptible or imperceptible soul. On the failure of your duty I shall have you destroyed or extirpated for ever from the face of the earth; I give you my oath on this." In the third gate she placed some grain as a sentinel and said to it, "Oh grain, a form of God to nourish the world, I solemnly assign to you the duty of preventing the entrance of any soul or spirit into the house this night for my sake, or else you will have the punish-



ment of being annihilated for ever from the face of the earth." In the fourth door she herself sat to meet the danger. When the fixed hour came the messengers of death came to take the soul of the boy, but they were not allowed to enter the room. So they went back to their master, Death, and told their stories. At this, Death, being curious to see the supernatural power of the protectors, who had set his verdict at defiance, repaired to the house himself to take the soul of the youth as ordained before. No sooner had he entered the house by the door where the girl was keeping watch, than she bowed down to him saying, "Father, have mercy on me, the most miserable creature in the world, by sparing the boy to whom I have been wedded." Death, on being so affectionately and humbly addressed by a girl of very tender age, could not but spare her husband and said to her "Daughter, I have been so moved by your humble petition, that I leave your husband for 12 years multiplied by 120 years in this world." The Death having wished happiness to the young pair departed from the house.

21. THE TWO CLEVER THIEVES

There was a hereditary thief once upon a time. He had two sons, who not caring for their father's



profession, used to idle away their time in other ways. So the father was very angry with them and chastised them. So they came to their senses and agreed to learn the profession. After having been thoroughly trained in the art of theft for some years, they were at last sent by their father to steal. On the first day they stole a valuable necklace of big pearls out of the palace of the king of the country; on the second day jewellery and on the third day a large amount of money. In spite of careful search and investigation by the police officers of the king no clue could be found to the outrageous actions of the criminals. For they used to commit their thefts at night, and to sit in the kings' courtyard during the day time, after having attired themselves gorgeously like great persons. In such a state of affairs, the king and his courtiers adopted a plan to discover them. An elephant loaded with a great treasure was let loose to find out the offender. The thieves unseen by others sank the elephant in a deep ditch and took away the money at night. The elephant disappeared next day. Then a courtesan was deputed. She started for the city and roved from door to door among the women of the houses asking for a little of the elephant's dung which she needed for some



medicine, and she offered an exorbitantly high price for it. The mother of the young thieves being ignorant of the real business of her sons, sold it to the procuress who at once sealed or marked the house with cow-dung and went to the palace and reported her success in the presence of the thieves themselves, who had sat there in the disguise of gentlemen. The court proposed to search the house of the woman (who had sold the elephant's dung) next morning. The thieves at once went and put similar marks of dung on all the houses of the city. Next day when the police officers and minister were led by the witch to the house of the woman to arrest her, to the bewilderment of the expert woman they found all the houses bearing a similar mark. So she could not succeed in pointing out the house of the thieves and so they were left undiscovered.

One night the thieves, and their father, entered the palace by a window on one of the high walls of the house, by fixing pegs in the wall and hanging a rope on them for going up and down it. As soon as they had thrown down the valuable articles the guards awoke and were about to arrest them, but the young men got off quickly. Seeing their father, an old man, unable to act as they did, and about to



be apprehended by the guards, they cut off his head and threw it away. As the body could not be identified the police conveyed it to every street of the town offering it to anyone who might ask for it for burning (as a means of discovery). No one asked for it or mourned over it. At last the police had to burn the body to ashes by the king's orders, so they took it to the funeral ghat for that purpose, a great crowd following them out of curiosity to see the consumption of the headless corpse. It was necessary according to their religion for the heirs of the deceased to mourn and bemoan him at the last funeral rite, so the mother of the thieves (the wife of the deceased) taking a pot of curds thrust herself into the dense throng and fell down with her curds in consequence of being pushed. So she feigned to weep over her curds, saying, "Oh my dear curds, what has become of you? and where have you gone to, leaving me alone here?" No one understood her stratagem. Her sons, who had the head of their father which it was necessary to have burnt with the body, enclosed it in a drum, and followed the rabble in the disguise of beggar minstrels, lamenting over their father and singing sad ballads and hymns. When the pyre was in flames the beggar minstrels (the young thieves)



insisted on receiving gifts from the police officials (no such ceremony is an occasion for alms). No sooner were they reprimanded for their improper begging than they became angry and threw the drum (containing the head of their father) into the burning flames and pretended to weep over their drum, all the people being ignorant of the real reason. In reality they were weeping over the death of their father.

22. THE BHADRA OUTWITTED

Once a certain man started from his home to the house of his father-in-law on a day rendered unpropitious by Bhadra (an unlucky moment). The Bhadra followed him in the form of his own shadow. When he arrived there the Bhadra did the same. To his father and mother-in-law and to his own wife also two faces (he and the Bhadra in his shape) of like form and stature appeared to their amazement. None of them could in any way distinguish the real man and the Bhadra in his image. Two men of the same countenance and stature stood at dinner and bed. The girl was claimed by each of them equally. At last the parents permitted the girl to go with her husband. She followed both to some distance when two roads from different directions met. The real husband was taking



his wife to his own house but the Bhadra attempted to take her by another road. So a conflict took place when an arm of the girl was caught by her own husband and another by the Bhadra ghost. The real husband at last had recourse to the Raja of the place; so did the Bhadra ghost, each claiming the damsel to be his own wife before the king. After hearing the parties the ingenious king had a water-pot with two holes put before him, and wanted to test thereby the real man. So he said that he would allow him to have the wife who would pass into the vessel from one hole, and come out through the other, twice or thrice. Of course, it was impossible for a human being to compress himself thus and then come out through the hole. The other form Bhadra did this, however, as desired by the king. While in the act of doing so, the Bhadra ghost was shut up by the king within the vessel, by closing the holes. The king then allowed the man and his wife to go home, keeping the ghost confined within the pot for some months, when it disappeared by evaporation. The Hindus therefore take care to avoid days polluted by the Bhadra, for all their undertakings, such as going on pilgrimage or other journeys, performing religious and social duties, building and occupying



new houses, etc. On the whole nothing good is commenced during the portion of day and night which is eclipsed by the Bhadra. This prevails during the first or second half of certain lunar dates, being the shade of a certain planet, according to astrology.

23. WISDOM SUPERIOR TO WEALTH

There were once two men, one noted for his ingeniousness and the other for his wealth. They quarrelled with each other about each one's superiority to the other. They went to wise and learned men to decide their respective claims and preciousness, and had arbitrators appointed for the purpose, but to no effect. They then resorted to the subordinate king of the country, who, being himself unable to decide between them, referred them to the superior king. They then represented their case to him, who ordered them to file a joint application on the subject matter. On receipt of their petition the superior king passed an order on it that the parties should be beheaded, and sent it to the subordinate one for execution of the sentence, after having them chained and hand-cuffed as though convicted of some grave offence. Being thus suddenly humiliated and mortified by the sentence, they began to repent of their contention,



and the ingenious man asked the wealthy man, "Dear sir, can you think of any alternative by which to escape the imminent calamity?" The wealthy man replied, "Dear brother, I do not see any, but I am willing to spend the whole of my wealth, billions of rupees, to save my life, for it is all useless to me after I die." The wise man again asked, "Sir, will you then give me half of your wealth on condition that your life is saved?" The opulent man rejoined, "Certainly I will," and he instantly wrote a letter to the wise man to this effect and gave it to him, as an assurance. The wise man kept the letter in his possession and went to the sub-king with his comrade and earnestly implored him to have them beheaded at once then and there. The king, astonished at such a request to meet instant death, enquired, "Gentlemen, what is it that makes you so impatient to give up your lives so readily? For we human beings are always naturally anxious to prolong our lives even for a few minutes at the sacrifice of the whole of our riches." The wise man said, "My lord, since we are destined to die, we must die a pious and cheerful death in accordance with our scriptures, which plainly set forth that an innocent death will secure to the deceased the felicity of paradise, whereas it will annihilate



him and his posterity from the face of the earth, who kills or causes to be killed an innocent person. The saying of the wise man made a great impression on the mind of the king, and acted as a deterrent against his execution of the sentence passed by the higher authority. Under such circumstances, the sub-king sent the parties back to the higher king, saying that he himself was unable to execute them, for, it would be a great shock to his conscience. They appeared then before the supreme king and related every thing that had passed in the meantime, and showed the letter which had occasioned the rich man to write to the wise man to save his life. The king said, "You are at liberty to go where you please, since you have decided the matter under issue, yourself, inasmuch as the rich man has acknowledged the superiority of the wise man."

24. THE THING MOST APPRECIATED IN THE WORLD

Once upon a time there was a king of a certain country who placed recorders of gossip at all the gates which led to his capital. Once four women passed by one of the recording stations arguing among themselves the thing most appreciated in the world. One woman claimed the superiority of



the flesh, the second that of liquor, the third suggested harlots, and the other insisted that falsehood stood first. The recorder heard their conversation, and noted the topics they discussed together with the whereabouts of each of the women. The register, as usual, was sent at the end of the month to the king for his perusal. The king sent for the women and commanded each of them to prove their words.

“What further proof can you demand of me, my lord, of the fondness for flesh in the animal and vegetable kingdom?”, exclaimed the first woman, “You can see it with your own eyes. First of all is not flesh devoured by mankind and the bones chewed by dogs? The refuse of bones is eaten by the ants and other insects, and what they leave is disposed of by the vegetable kingdom. As no portion of flesh is left unutilized, does it not claim ascendancy over all other edible things in the world?” The king noted all she had said in his own mind, and permitted her to go.

The second woman then appeared to prove her statement: “Dear Sir,” she said “liquor, that is to say, strong drink is comparatively more costly than other beverages. It deprives its devotees of their senses, when under its influence, besides draining



their resources. Notwithstanding these evil results it is impossible for them to withstand its temptation, and in the end it brings its victims to bankruptcy and the grave. Yet there are always others to take their place and still the worship of drink goes on." The king, convinced in his mind by her argument, allowed her to go.

The third woman came there and began to speak: "Sir, you know well that people seduced by harlots become bankrupt and contract various diseases in their society, which eventually lead them to poverty and to the grave; still they are not got rid of. They are so madly attached to the prostitutes that they have no care left for their moral and spiritual character, or their worldly prospects. These facts conclusively prove that I am right in my statement." After having heard so much the king let the third woman go.

The fourth woman was called and she spoke, "Sire, the love of falsehood stands unrivalled, if you will only permit yourself to see it." She was then eagerly requested by the king and his courtiers to explain her words. She continued, "My lords, I cannot explain to you unless you pay me Rs.10,000." She was at once paid the sum. After sending the money to her home she said, "Dear



sirs, wonderful things are to be seen, from yonder banyan tree. On the Amawas (when there is no moon) but only by those who are real sons of their fathers (i.e. not born of paramours of their mothers) and no person who is born a bastard, can see them." She then went away to her home. After some month the day fixed arrived, when all the people, including the king, waited to see the promised spectacle. So the woman was sent for. She came there in time and conveyed the assembled company to the banyan tree, and again told them to climb up the tree from whence they would see wonderful things, provided they were the real sons of their fathers. First up went the royal priest. He saw nothing but the usual view, so that he became suspicious of his birth, and to conceal the blemishes of his mother he felt obliged to tell a lie, and professed to have seen wonders and marvellous sights of the three worlds. The king next mounted the tree. He saw nothing, but he too would not confess, so followed the example of the royal priest. These facts led every one of those assembled there to climb the tree and pretend they had seen wonderful sights. After this all repaired to their respective homes. While at home some of them asked most solemnly and confidentially their intimate friends



about the alleged shows. They privately whispered that they saw nothing at all. The whispers also leaked out to the king who, emboldened thereby, asked his royal priest, who said he also saw nothing. The king also blurted out the secret of his seeing nothing there. Gradually every one said publicly that he saw nothing from the banyan tree. The king and his people at last found themselves thus imposed upon by the woman who was immediately arrested and brought before the king to answer to the charge of cheating. To that charge she replied, "Sirs, I told you beforehand that falsehood had the greatest relish in the world. It was only the relish of the falsehood which caused you to dance like puppets under its wonderful power or influence." The humour of the whole thing appealed to the king, and so the woman was acquitted of the charge.

25. AN UPRIGHT OFFICER

Once a great officer, with a view to test the truthfulness of his subordinates, said to them during the daytime that he could see the stars in the sky, looking towards the firmament at the same time. On his so addressing them the whole crowd, except one, began to say at once, "Certainly Sir, we can also see them distinctly, shining in the sky." The



other man kept silence during this time. The officer then looking towards him asked him whether he could see the stars which he did. Rather indignantly, the man replied, "My Lord, I can hardly see anything amidst the blazing rays of the sun; I wonder whether I have had my eyes spoilt or whether you all have." The officer was greatly pleased with the man for his clear and upright conscience, and he openly censured the sycophancy of the others, who, he said, had no consciences or only dull ones, and were unfit to exercise judgment.

26. A JUST AND WISE KING

A certain one-armed man had 500 gold mohars which he had covered concealed under a certain tree in a certain jungle. He used to make sure of it by occasionally looking at it. A time came when to his despair he found it taken away. So thinking it stolen, he was constrained to lay a complaint about this before the king of the country, saying at the same time that he had no witnesses to produce, either to the riches being deposited there by himself, or to its being taken away by anybody. That just and wise king, after having inspected the spot, sent for all the physicians of his kingdom and inquired from each of them as to



CHAPTER III—ANIMAL LORE

I. THE FOXES AND THE ELEPHANT

ONCE a band of foxes conspired together to kill and eat an elephant. The whole body went to the elephant and their spokesman addressed him as follows: "My Lord, we are badly in need of a king to rule over us, and all our plans are random and ill-concerted since the death of our former king the lion. If you will be so kind as to become our king, we shall all be entirely at your service. You will no longer have to roam about looking for food, for we shall provide you with every necessity, while you sit at home at ease."

The elephant, suspecting no ill, agreed to their artful suggestions and assumed the royal office. From that time they used to gather fodder for him and all waited upon him on tip-toe to carry out his slightest command. Once they brought him some delicious soft grass out of a marshy place, and the elephant enjoyed it more than any other food. They supplied him with it constantly and he relished it more and more. The foxes then told the elephant, "We are ready always to bring



to your majesty anything you wish, but perhaps it would be better if you condescended to go with us some day to the place where we get the grass, and point to us the kind you prefer." The elephant accompanied the foxes to the place, and began to feed greedily on the soft grass of the swamps. The further he went the more he sank into it. When he had gone to a little depth the foxes said, "My Lord, allow us to lift you up." The elephant still feeding away with his mouth full of grass said, "Dear friends, do so by all means." So they all used their united strength to raise him up. After lifting him somewhat they let him plump down again suddenly, and repeating the process several times, as if anxious to drag him out of the mud, they at length caused him to sink entirely in the marsh, where he was drowned, and the cunning foxes devoured his carcase.

In some parts of India where the jackal is commoner than the fox, he figures much more largely than that animal in folklore; and as Mr. J. L. Kipling in his 'Beast and Man in India' says, "The jackal is the true Mr. Reynard of Eastern folklore, the great originator of the best of our fox stories—sweet toothed, mischievous, lurking, and as full of resource as Brer Rabbit". Mr. Kipling



also reminds us that his Sanskrit-born name, gidar, means greedy, and is doubtless from the same root (Sanskrit gridhnu). In the two jackal stories of the present collection, it is the jackal's consistent cunning in saving himself trouble and imposing on his betters that is dwelt on.

2. THE JACKAL AND THE TIGER'S DEN

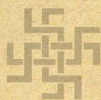
There was once a jackal whose wife presented him with young ones. They, poor things, felt very unhappy, as she had no house for her cubs. The father promised to make a house for them in a certain jungle, and every day after taking his morning meal he would go off, but instead of working he would sleep the whole day. On his return in the evening he pretended he had begun the house, and that it was taking a long time on account of certain contentions which he described, making a long yarn about it every evening; and this pretence he carried on for months. The mother jackal became very angry with him for this troublesome delay. So, one day, as he was going through the forest he spied the den of a tiger and returned home with the glad news that the house was ready for occupation. The next day he took his wife and family to the cave and installed them in it. He then instructed his wife that when he



gave a certain signal she was to bite her cubs and make them cry, and when he should ask why they were crying, to tell him that they wanted the flesh of a tiger, and would not eat the stale one which he had killed for them yesterday. Towards evening the jackal placed himself at the entrance of the cave, and presently the tiger returned, and seeing the jackal gave a loud roar and made a spring towards him. But at that moment the mother jackal inside made her cubs cry loudly, and the father asked what was the matter. She replied from within that her young ones wanted fresh tiger meat and refused to eat the stale flesh of the tiger killed the day before. This talk of theirs so frightened the tiger that he left the place instantly and fled for his life to a distant jungle, and never disturbed them any more.

3. THE JACKALS AND THE TIGERS

The hills were the original abode of the jackals, and the plains of the Bhabar (just below the hills) were inhabited by the tigers. Once these two species proposed an exchange of territory, and the jackals arrived in the Bhabar just when the tigers had started to the hills by the same route. The sight of so many tigers together rather frightened the jackals, for they feared they might be attacked



and devoured, but they did not lose their presence of mind. Seeing the carcase of an elephant lying there, one of the jackals mounted on it, placing all his comrades around, and loudly declaring that he had killed it. The company of tigers was now drawing near, and as they advanced the jackal cried, "Bring me my scimitar that I may break the skull of this first tiger." The tigers hearing this, and seeing the boastful attitude of the jackal on the dead body of an elephant, were greatly alarmed. Those behind pushed forward the tigers in point, and they began to growl and quarrel among themselves, and made no progress. The jackal who professed to have slain an elephant then addressed the tigers, "Dear Brothers, you have no occasion to fear us. Let us all be friends. The way to do this is by arranging a close alliance between the two tribes. Now you have many young females among you. Let one of them be married to me." The tigers, imposed on by the proud words and attitude of the jackal, consented to the proposed connexion, and a tigress was married to the jackal, who took her to his den. One day when they felt hungry they went out to hunt. The tigress, whose mental superiority began to assert itself, posted the jackal at a narrow



pass with instructions to kill animals there when driven up by her from the jungle. Some deer were then driven through the gorge, but the jackal could not kill one of them. The tigress on her return finding nothing killed asked him the cause. He replied it was quite improper to kill an animal when it was frightened, and he gave her a box on the ear by way of correcting her for asking such a foolish question. She endured it, as he was her husband, and she owed him wifely obedience. Then she took him to a large herd of deer, but the jackal only killed a fawn which could not run away. On her questioning him about it, he gave her another cuff which she endured patiently. The third time she charged him to kill some buffaloes for their food, which of course he was unable to do, and she was obliged to go and kill them herself. Taking offence at this, the jackal struck her angrily, saying that he would have destroyed them slowly and playfully and not as she has done at one full stroke. On another occasion they began to cross a large river. The tigress got across, but the jackal could not and returned from the water. She was obliged then to swim back and take her husband over. No sooner did they arrive at the bank than he gave her another blow charg-



ing her with going off without his permission. They had again occasion to return to the opposite bank of the river. The tigress reached the other side by swimming straight across, but the jackal let himself float down the river and reached the other shore two miles below the spot. On meeting the tigress he reprimanded her severely for her insolence in not accompanying him. But this time when he offered to beat her, she killed the wretch.

4. THE TIGER AND THE TRAVELLER

A man-eating tiger was once caught in a trap in the forest. Seeing a man pass by, the tiger earnestly and piteously implored him to open the trap and set him free, at the same time promising to give the traveller a fine pair of gold bracelets, which he had found on the body of a man recently killed by him, as soon as he was let loose. The traveller, tempted by this rich offer, opened the door of the trap and let him out. As soon as he was free, the tiger ungratefully attacked the man, who pleaded earnestly with the beast, and at last persuaded him to submit the matter to arbitration. The trees of the forest and fox were to be the umpires. The trees were of opinion that though mankind on the whole was their enemy, yet as



every one would be requitted according to his deeds, they would say nothing. The fox on his part demanded to see the parties in the dispute return to their original positions, so that he might judge easily between them. The tiger was made to re-enter the trap and the man closed the door of it and went by. Thereupon the fox decided that either party should remain as they were. They went off home and the tiger remained imprisoned in the trap to meet with the due reward of his deeds.

5. THE SHE-GOAT AND THE LEOPARD

Once upon a time a highly respectable old she-goat was grazing in a jungle, when she spied a leopard lying in wait to kill her. Instead of being frightened or running away, she assumed a calm attitude and did not move a pace from the spot, shewing that she was quite prepared and willing to meet her end. This uncommon behaviour of her made the leopard pause and he asked the goat what she meant by it. So he enquired, "Dear sister, I am about to kill you, why do you stand so undauntedly in your place?" She replied, "Dear brother, I have already discharged my worldly duty to my owner, who has been enriched by my giving birth to numerous progeny twenty-one times for



his benefit. To tell the truth he has been brought by this means to a state of prosperity from a very miserable condition, owing to the children I have borne. For two years I have ceased to have young ones, and since then my unkind master has taken no care of me and refuses to provide fodder. He drives me to the jungle every morning to graze and has no concern for me now. I heard him talking last night with his family, saying that "I should be killed for meat. He is certain to kill me without the least regard for the benefits he has received from me during my past life. As I am quite convinced in my mind of the selfishness of mankind I thought it a good thing to be killed and eaten by any animal other than a man. So I was very glad when I saw you lying in wait to kill me." The leopard was touched by this speech of the she-goat, and made friends with her. They used to wander about together in the jungle from that day, and the leopard allowed no harm to come to her. Indeed so kind was the leopard to the goat that he once caught hold of the trunk of an elephant and made him promise to take the goat on his back and feed her with twigs and leaves.



6. THE FELINE RACE

The cat is said to be the ancestor of leopards and tigers, though these have developed to such a superior size. Their qualities and disposition are just the same as those of the cat. The cat taught her progeny every shift and device of her kind, but fearing danger from their large stature she kept back from them the art of climbing trees as a means of escape for herself, should they turn upon her at any time. And so it proved. For, when they grew to full size, they attacked their grandmother, the cat, who escaped by climbing a tree, an art in which leopards and tigers are to this day deficient.

7. THE CUNNING FOE

A leopard, a wolf, a wild cat, a fox and a mouse once conspired to kill a big antelope in the forest, a feat which none of them singly could achieve. The crafty fox said, "Our friend the mouse will gnaw the hoofs of the antelope while he sleeps and then the leopard will easily catch and kill him. We can then enjoy the flesh for a long time." The mouse and the leopard did their part of the bargain successfully. Then the others assembled to take their share of the antelope. The artful fox said, "Brothers, here



is the fat deer lying on the ground. You should all go to the river to perform the due ablution, and I will take care of the carcass until you return. So they all went to the river-side and the fox remained to think out some means of appropriating the whole deer. On his return the leopard found the fox deep in thought and asked him why he looked so anxious, "What do you advise? Shall we not eat the flesh and play with each other?" The fox replied, "Dear brother, I am sorry to tell you that the mouse has invoked a terrible curse on you. He has said, "Blasted be the strength and powers of the leopard, for he will gorge himself with the flesh of the deer, and leave nothing for me who helped to kill it." Aghast at this news, and fearing the curse, the leopard left the spot and hid himself in a distant jungle. Then the mouse came, and to him the fox said, "Brother, the jungle-cat says he does not wish to eat the flesh of the deer, preferring yours. I warn you of the danger. You may do as you please." The mouse withdrew to his hole, where he stayed trembling with fear. Next the wolf came. The fox said to him, "Dear friend, I am sorry to say that the leopard is very angry at the idea of any of us sharing in the deer. He has gone off to fetch his



family to eat it. Do as you like, but as you are stronger than I am, I will leave you here." The wolf thereupon turned tail and bolted. The wild cat only remained. The fox said, "My dear cat, the leopard, the wolf and the mouse have all run away after being defeated by me, you and I will fight a duel for the deer. The cat also hastily departed, leaving the fox to enjoy the whole ante-lope alone.

8. A TANGLED YARN

Once an old woman and her grandson lived together. The boy used to graze sheep and goats in the jungle. One day the grand-mother called loudly, telling him to return home as a hurricane was coming. A leopard who was lurking near, waiting his chance of carrying off one of the flock, overheard what she said and began to wonder what a hurricane was. He already knew that a storm meant a high wind but this new word puzzled and alarmed him. So he hid himself among the sheep and goats, and along with them entered the sheep-fold for the night. Not long after, four thieves crept in to steal a goat from the shed. In the darkness they felt among the animals, and finding the leopard to be the largest and fattest, put a rope round his neck and led him away. The leopard,



still in vague fear of the hurricane, submitted. At break of day the thieves, finding to their amazement that their fat sheep was a large leopard, at once set him free and hastily climbed up into the hollow trunk of a dried tree, fearing an attack from the beast. But the leopard had no mind for hostilities. He fled away into the jungle, and there met a bear, who asked him why he was running away so fast. The leopard replied, "Brother, I have just narrowly escaped the terrible peril called 'Hurricane'." The bear rejoined, "My dear Sir, We jungle beasts are afraid of no one. You are surely alarmed without cause: show me this Hurricane. I will fight him." The leopard, feeling reassured, led the bear to the hollow tree, as the place where the hurricane was lying concealed. The bear climbed up the trunk and dropped his tail into it to feel and ascertain the nature of the danger. The thieves caught hold of it and began to tug with all their might. The bear in terror pulled and got his tail much bruised and hurt before he could tear himself away. The bear and the leopard ran off into the jungle and there met a tiger, who enquired the reason of their panic. The leopard and the bear told their stories. The tiger, dismissing the report with



contempt, offered to help them if they would show him the danger. So the three wild beasts started off again. The thieves, seeing the tiger with two allies coming towards them, climbed further up the tree. The tiger took his station under the tree and roared frightfully, which so terrified one of the thieves that he fell down on the tiger's back and clasped him so tightly that the tiger thought he was being ridden by a demon and took to flight. In running, the thief was thrown down by the tiger and lay unconscious. When all three beasts had reached a safe distance, they congratulated one another on their escape. The tiger grumbled angrily at the leopard and the bear, on account of the wrong information they had given him, saying, "You quite misled me, saying the hurricane was a kind of dragging thing, whereas I found him to be a rider of beasts. If I had known that, I would not have ventured to approach it."

Learned anthropologists tell us that early man conceived animals as being quite as wise as himself, but the above story belongs to a more modern cycle, and not unpleasingly attempts to describe the half light of animal intelligence in relation to human beings.



9. A GOAT'S RESOURCES

Once a shepherd, in the days when the speech of the animals was more generally understood, asked one of his goats what protection he had against unforeseen dangers if he went alone into the jungle. The goat replied, "Sir, I have four brothers (legs) who can run and carry me away ; two brethren armed with clubs for my defence (horns) two brothers to fan me (ears) ; and one to drive off flies (tail).

10. THE SENSITIVE TIGER

The elephant, says Mr. J. L. Kipling, is often represented in Indian Folklore as peculiarly sensitive, though probably with little cause. It is rare, however, to find the tiger credited with a thin skinned liability to be hurt in his feelings, as in the following story.

A certain Brahmin, having to marry his daughter, went into a far country to earn money for her dowry. Passing through a jungle he met a tiger who asked where he was going and for what purpose. The Brahmin told his story with strict truth, and the tiger taking him to his den showed him all the gold ornaments and jewels which he had collected from the persons of those whom he had slain. The tiger very generously told him to



take them all as the marriage portion of his daughter, adding a request that he would invite him also to the wedding ; but saying that he wished to have a private corner assigned him at the ceremonies, lest the people should be alarmed by his presence. The marriage day arrived, and the tiger, according to promise, was accommodated in a cellar under the house. In the midst of the festivities the guests began to notice an unpleasant odour (from the tiger) and asked the Brahmin the cause of it. The Brahmin, afraid of telling out the secret, said it must be coming from the manure-heap in the yard, a remark which was overheard by the tiger. The marriage ceremony being over, the tiger, deeply wounded by the words of his host, commanded him to strike off his head with an axe, or, he would kill him. To save his life the Brahmin had at last to strike the tiger in the manner indicated. The blow which he gave to the tiger's head made an incision an inch deep. The tiger told him to return to see him after a week. The Brahmin did so, and found the wound already healed up. The tiger admonished him, "My friend, the bodily wound you inflicted on me has healed in this short time, but the mental wound you caused me is still unhealed. In future, take



care not to hurt the feelings of other people. for such impressions remain unerased for a long time, as the proverb says, "Sometimes words wound more than swords."

II. THE ELEPHANT AND THE MOUSE

An elephant and a mouse met in a forest. The elephant, scarcely deigning to notice the little animal, began to abuse him saying, "You mean and wretched creature, you are only fit to gaze at me from a distance. I can, if I like, tread you into nothing with a single stamp of my foot." The mouse answered him, "Oh, greatest of beasts, I salute you. The same God has created us both for different purposes, and has endowed us with different powers, according to our need. You need not be proud, for both of us will soon perish. If you depend on your strength, I depend on my wisdom. So there is in reality nothing to boast about." The elephant replied, "We are indeed of the same earth, but I am born far superior by nature, and your duty is simply to submit to me and pay obeisance to my higher qualities; otherwise you must be punished. Wisdom has no ascendancy over nature." Thus they disputed angrily. The mouse, in order to convince the elephant of the superiority of wisdom, began to dig



a ditch in the ground where the elephant was accustomed to walk. Accordingly one day the latter fell into the hole, and was utterly helpless to extricate himself. Thus humbled, the elephant begged the mouse's pardon, and acknowledged the superiority of wisdom, whereupon the mouse filled up the ditch and enabled the elephant to come out.

12. THE CAT AND THE MOUSE

A certain cat once asked a mouse to give him his daughter in marriage, forgetting the law of nature. The mouse was so puffed up at the idea of this noble alliance that he agreed to the request, in spite of its strangeness, and a date was fixed for the wedding. Following the usual custom, a train of cats formed the marriage procession, and went with a drum to the mouse's dwelling, or rather hole. The maternal relatives of the bride were gathered there, also accompanied by a drummer to receive the bridegroom and his party. Just as the two processions were advancing towards each other, the drummer of the cats, forgetting himself, sounded the war signal, "One to catch two!" (One cat to catch two mice) "One to catch two." Understanding the signal and also yielding to the force of habit, the mouse's drummer sounded, "Run away and hide! Run away and hide," which the



mice promptly did ; and on the arrival of the cats there was not a single member of the bride's party to be seen. They called from outside "Oh foolish mouse, come out and hear us." The mice from within answered, "O artful and greedy cats, speak on, we are listening inside." The end of it was that no marriage took place.

13. AN UNGRATEFUL FOX CHASTISED BY GOD

A fox once entered the stomach of the dead body of a camel for the purpose of eating into its intestines. He devoured them for some days, without in the least thinking as to how he would come out of it. In the meanwhile the way by which the fox penetrated to the belly of the dead body, having been closed owing to the drying of the skin in the sun, the fox was tightly pressed within it. Being subjected to such a difficult position the fox prayed God for a rainfall so that the skin might be softened to enable him to make his way out. God granted his request by causing rainfall on the dried body. As soon as the animal had come out, he let God at defiance, saying that he was all-powerful himself, even to have rain of his own sweet will, and tried to escape from God's presence. God therefore had a damsel of tar made, and put it up in the jungle, placing a bit of



meat in its hand. The fox came there and asked for the meat, but it could not and did not give it. Being enraged at this conduct of the tar damsel, the animal gave it two buffets, which stuck him to it. This provoked him more. In his further attempts to extricate himself from it, his whole body became fast to the tar. Seeing him in this plight, God chastised him, and then he came to his senses, and praised God for His greatness, with self-humiliation and mortification

The "slimness" of the fox has often been dwelt on in folklore, but the following story exhibits his cynical cunning as well.

14. A FOX AND A BEAR

(1)

A fox and a bear made friends, and agreed to set up a joint establishment. They bought a buffalo for the sake of its milk, and it was agreed that the buffalo should be tethered in the jungle and watched by either in turn. The fox would milk her in the day after she had been grazed by the bear, and vice versa. The good honest bear used to carry out his duty thoroughly and feed the buffalo with plenty of leaves and twigs, which he pulled off the trees. The fox thus fared well and got plenty of milk. When it was the bear's turn,



however, to milk the animal, he could hardly get any, for the fox neither would nor could feed it properly. After a time the fox grew tired of a milk-diet, and thought he would like to eat the flesh of the buffalo. He therefore took it to graze along the edge of a steep precipice, and it was not long in falling over. The buffalo, however, did not fall quite to the bottom, but lodged half-way down ; so the fox brought his friend the bear to lift her up, and himself stood at the top of the cliff to give his advice and help in the operation. With great exertion the bear raised the buffalo. Just as he was reaching the top, the fox gave him a vigorous push and both bear and buffalo rolled to the bottom and lay dead. The fox had now the materials for a grand feast, but he found himself unable to remove the skin of the buffalo, and so went to the Doms, the low-caste villagers, who alone in the hill country eat the flesh of the buffalo, even when dead, and invited them to come and cut up the corpse and eat it. A great concourse of Doms gathered, leaving their village entirely empty, and, while they were cutting up the buffalo, the fox went and set fire to their houses. Returning, he informed the Doms that their village was burning, whereupon they, of course, rushed off to



their houses, and were occupied a long time in putting out the fire. The fox proceeded in a leisurely manner to devour the flesh, and when he was well satisfied, he went up to the top of a ridge, and sang his well-known ditty about how pleasant it was to have killed his brother the bear and to have burnt the huts of the Doms to ashes.

15. THE FOX AND THE BEAR

(2)

Once a fox chose a bear as a companion and they used to walk about everywhere together. The fox, being the more cunning animal, used to dupe the bear in every way for his amusement. One day in the jungle they came upon a large hornets' nest, and the fox, intending to play a trick on the bear, began to beat on the hollow hornets' hill, which sounded like a drum. The bear's simple mind was quite charmed with the proceeding, as the fox had anticipated, and he asked the fox to let him try playing the drum on the hornets' nest. The fox replied, "O Yes, dear brother bear, now beat it soundly and it will make a fine noise." The bear began to dance and beat the nest with his great feet, and it was soon broken in, when all the hornets rushed out and stung the bear terribly to the great delight of his malicious friend. Another



time the sly fox hung up a swing over a precipice and began to swing himself in it, while the bear sat and watched. The fox made out he was having a fine time and enjoying himself greatly. The stupid bear, believing what the fox said, asked for a turn in the swing for a few minutes. The fox said, "Certainly, dear brother bear ; but remember that if you push the swing hard and make it go far out, the pleasure will be all the greater." The bear got into the swing, and the fox gave it a great jerk which made the cord break, and the bear fell down the steep, bumping himself very severely, to the secret delight of his false companion.

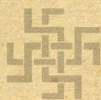
A third time the wicked fox cut off the tail of dead buffalo and put it inside a hole in the wall under a terrace which overhung a deep valley. Then he went to his friend, the bear, and informed him that a buffalo had got into the wall, and if they pulled hard enough they could get him out and eat him. They went to the spot, and the bear, taking hold of the tail, dragged it out with all his force and unbalancing himself rolled down the precipice and was killed.

16. THE AMBITIOUS MOUSE

Once upon a time there was a certain mouse who had a beautiful daughter of marriageable age.



He was very ambitious and determined to espouse her to the most powerful personage in the world, in order to raise the level of his own social position. With this purpose in view he went to the sun and offered his daughter in marriage, but the sun declined the honour saying, "Oh my dear mouse, I would gratefully accept your kind offer, were it not that my circumstances prevent me, for these reasons. First, I am the centre and focus of heat, and your daughter would be unable to bear my scorching rays. Secondly, I have no house to live in. Thirdly, having to travel incessantly day and night round the earth, I have no time to earn food and clothing for her. So you had better go to my brother, the moon, and marry your girl to him." At once the mouse journeyed to the moon, to whom he made the same offer to give him his daughter in marriage. The moon received the mouse with great courtesy and etiquette and said "Dear Sir, I am not a proper match for your daughter, since I have stains on my body, in consequence of which I conceal myself in the day-time and appear only at night. Besides, the cloud has supremacy over me, inasmuch as he can cover me up at any time. It behoves you then to give your daughter to the cloud, who is stronger than I am."



The father accordingly went to the cloud and made his offer. The cloud put forward his inability to marry the girl since he was easily blown away by his enemy, the wind, and so referred him to the wind as a husband for his daughter. Accordingly his next visit was to the wind. The wind said, "Alas, Dear Sir, I am not at all a big person in the world ; true, I can blow away all things, with the exception of the stone, and he is bigger and heavier than I am. Better you should give your daughter to the stone." The old mouse at once betook himself to the stone, who said, "Woe is me ! I am an inanimate thing, quite unable to move. How can I earn bread and clothing for your daughter ? Why not go to the earth, who produces savoury edible grains and vegetables, besides precious stones and valuable metals. He could marry your daughter and provide her with every luxury and necessity." To this suggestion, the mouse thankfully paid his respects to the earth, and represented his case. The earth said, "Your offer is welcome, but I cannot marry your daughter, being bound by the roots of trees, which I bear on my head, and I am then prevented from going here and there in search of livelihood. You had better go to the tree and espouse your daughter to him. He is superior to



me." The mouse then started to the tree, and addressed him. The tree said, "Though I do control the earth in some way, still your little mice are superior, for you cut and eat into my roots and make me wither, so you should give your daughter in marriage to the mouse, for, he, being so powerful can certainly accept your offer." In this manner the mouse, after all, had to go to the mouse to whom his daughter was married with great rejoicings and feastings.



CHAPTER IV—BIRD FOLKLORE

THE cuckoo in England is believed to change into a hawk in winter (sparrow hawk). In Germany after St. John's Day, about the time when it becomes mute. Kelly asks, "As the form of the cuckoo remotely resembles that of the falcon tribe, may we conjecture that hence in German tradition that bird in some degree represents the fire-bringing falcon of the Aryans?" Manhardt says, "The cuckoo is the messenger of Thor, the god in whose gift were health and strength, length of days and marriage blessings." And therefore it is that people call upon the bird to tell how long they have to live, and how soon they will be married, and how many children they shall have ; and that in Schauenburg the person who acts at a wedding as master of the ceremonies carries a cuckoo in his staff.

Kelly says: "The cuckoo's connexion with storms and tempests is not clearly determined, but the owl's is indisputable. Its cry is believed in England to foretell hail and rain ; the latter of which is usually accompanied with lightning, and the practice of nailing it to the barndoor, to



await the lightning, is common throughout Europe, and is mentioned in an ancient treatise on agriculture.

The robin—In Ireland (Gerard Vallency says) the Druids represented this bird as the king of birds. This superstitious respect offended most Christian missionaries, who taught the people to hunt and kill it on Christmas Day. In other countries it is a sacred bird. To take its life or even rob its nest in the Pays de Caux is regarded as a crime of such atrocity that it will bring down the lightning upon the homestead of the offender. In Perigord the swallow is called "lapula de Dieu" and is regarded as the messenger of life.

The raven, sacred to Odin and Apollo, the German and Greek form of the Aryan Rudra, was and indeed is yet, pre-eminently the bird of ill-omen. Othelo says, "Oh, it comes o'er my memory, as doth the raven o'er the infected house boding ill." The raven's power of scenting carrion from a great distance may have originally influenced, as in the case of the dog and the owl, its selection as a personification of impending death or other calamity. The raven was the standard of the Scandinavian Vikings, as the



eagle was that of the ancient Romans and of the French today.

Many other birds possess somewhat similar attributes to the raven, such as crows, magpies, jackdaws, etc. Ramsay, the author of the "Elminthologia," says, "If a crow fly but over the house and croak thrice, how do they fear, they or someone in the family shall die."

The croaking of crows and ravens foreboded rain. In this particular they resembled the woodpecker. It was (still is) held that to see a crow on the left hand is a sinister omen. The old formula it still credited, "One for sorrow, two for mirth, three for a wedding and four for death." On sight of a magpie turn round thrice, or mark a cross with the toe on the ground, to avert calamity.

The woodpecker, perhaps, of all the fire-bringing birds, has most permeated the ancient mythologies. The Latins named it Picus, whose brother (or double) Pilumnus, was the god of bakers and millers. In early times the millers pounded their corn with a pestle, and pilum signified both pestle and Javelin which are equally types of the thunderbolt. The tapping of the beak of the woodpecker was regarded as partaking of a similar character. On the birth of a child it was customary at Rome



to prepare a couch for Pilumnus and Pitumnus, who were believed to bring the fire of life, and were supposed to remain until the vitality of the infant was indisputable. The Romans likewise styled the woodpecker Martins and Feromius, from the god Mars and Sabine goddess Feronia. The name Feronia is indicative of fire or soul-bringing, intimately connected with that of Phoroneus, the Prometheus of a Peloponnesian legend, relating to the original procuring of the heavenly fire. Dr. Kuhn says both the names are identical with epithets commonly applied to the Aryan fire god Churannya, which signifies "one who pounces down, or bears down rapidly." Picus was the son of Saturn, and first king of Latium, as well as a fire-bringing bird. This, Kelly observes, "is only another way of saying that he like Manu, Manyas, Minos, Phoroneus, and other fire-bringers, is the first man; and therefore it is that, under the name of Picaninus, he continued in later times to be the guardian genius of children, along with his brother Piluminus."

A remarkable coincidence between the Anglo-Saxon pedigree of Odin, which makes Beow or Beowulf, one of his ancestors, and the story of the first king of Latium, is noticed by Gervinus. Bee-



wolf, that is "bee-eater," is the German name for the woodpecker. Among the various lightning birds of the Aryan mythology, some were regarded as portentous of evil. Others, as the robin, the stork, and the woodpecker, on the contrary, were regarded with favour and specially protected. The red beak of the robin, the red legs of the stork, and red patch of the woodpecker, were believed to result from their lightning origin.

In German the robin is held in as much regard as it is in England. The Anglo-Saxon name, "Herodh-be-osht" or "Heodbeht" signifies flame bright, which was one of the appellations of Thor. In illustration of the reverence paid to the red-breast, a writer in *Notes and Queries* relates the beautiful story, which he had heard from his nurse, a native of Carnarvonshire.

"Far away in a land of woe, darkness, spirits of evil and fire, day by day does the little bird bear in his bill a drop of water to quench the flame. So near to the burning stream does he fly that his dear little feathers are scorched; and hence he is named Bromhn-ddyn (i.e. breast burned, or breast scorched). To serve little children, the robin dares approach the infernal pit. No good child will hurt the devoted benefactor of men. The



robin returns from the land of fire, and, therefore, he feels the cold of winter far more than his brother birds. He shivers in the brumal blast; hungry he crips before your door. Oh! my child, thou in gratitude throw a few crumbs to poor Red-breast."

The Stork is in Germany ever a welcome guest, and wheels are placed on the roofs of houses in Hesse, in order to encourage the storks to build their nests thereon. Their presence is supposed to render the building safe against the ravages of fire.

I. THE TITIWA BIRD AND THE SEA

The bird called Tityan or Tittiwa had made her nest on the sea-shore. One day the tide rising higher than usual came up and washed away the nest with her young ones. Enraged at her loss, she set to work to dry the ocean by emptying out its waters. She began to take up the water in her bill and threw it on the land. Seeing her so determined, the sea became alarmed, and after a while, the tide returning threw back her young ones unharmed up on the beach.

In such stories as these we see the characteristic difference between the Greek mind as represented in Aesop's fables and the Indian spirit. They are



not so much fables as parables, in depth and subtility.

2. THE LISTIA BIRD AND THE ELEPHANT

A small bird known in the hills as Listia had built her nest in a bush and had hatched her young ones in it. The female bird one day left her mate in charge of the nest and went away to pick food for the young ones. In the interval an elephant passing by ate up the bush and killed the young, in spite of the distracted cries of the male bird. The female returning with food in her bill, overwhelmed with grief at her loss, resolved to die, unless her mate would slay the elephant in revenge for his barbarous treatment of her family. The husband tried to comfort her, assuring her that he would find some means of destroying this mighty foe by appealing to his friends for help. He then repaired to the woodpecker (Kath Khoriya) and after telling his sad story, added, "My dear friend, I am undone unless you aid me. One's own hand barely reaches a single cubit, but the hand of friendship extends a thousand leagues." The woodpecker promised, and went to his friend the black-bee, who after hearing all about the case, sought his friend the frog, and related the circumstances to him. The frog also promised to help. Then



they arranged a plot against the elephant. They made their way to the spot where the elephant was wont to rest. The black-bee buzzed in his ear until he was soothed to sleep, and then the woodpecker pecked out his eyes. The elephant, waking up, could not make out what had happened to him, but after a while, feeling thirsty, went staggering about in his blindness trying to find some water. The voice of the frog was then heard at a distance, and the elephant naturally thought he would be able to find water in that direction. The frog went on gradually in front of him, croaking as he went, until he reached a precipitous place, and the poor elephant followed, until at last he fell down the cliff and was killed. The Listia bird and his wife were then satisfied with their revenge.

The above story reminds us strongly of the tale of the Dog and Sparrow in Grimm, as well as of the cruel vengeance taken by the cock and hen, the duck, egg, pin and needle upon the unfortunate Squire Korbes.

3. A RASH MOTHER TURNED INTO A WILD DOVE

There is a kind of wild dove in the hills of Kumaun and Garhwal which flies very swiftly.



During spring and summer it sings a sweet song sounding like "Pur putli purai, purai," which means, "Oh delicate bird, all, all (are there)." The song is accounted for in this way. Once upon a time there lived a woman and her daughter. Having gathered some wild berries one day they put them away in a sunny place outside their cottage, and in consequence of the sun's heat they dried and shrank. After a day or two the woman remembered the berries and found them less in quantity than before. Getting into a furious rage, and believing that the daughter had eaten up some of the berries contrary to her orders, she struck her a blow on the head which caused her to die on the spot. The next day there was a shower of rain which wetted the berries and made them swell up again to their former size. Seeing this, and understanding her rash act, the unfortunate mother was seized with remorse, and after a while, dying, was turned into the bird which still sings its song of repentance vainly calling upon the spirit of her daughter in the woods.

4. AN ANXIOUS BROTHER TURNS INTO A WILD PIGEON

A wild pigeon sings his song "Bhai bhukho, Bhai bhukho, bhukho," "my brother is hungry."



The song is accounted for thus. A certain man was dangerously ill. His brother came to see him in the evening. The sick man called out to his family to prepare some food for his brother in the above words, and while speaking became unconscious and died. This last thought of his became as it were a fixed idea, and his soul, unable to rest, was transformed into a bird which ever cries out "Bhai bhukho."

5. FAITH IN GOD SAVED THE PIGEONS

The following story reminds us of Chaucer's Chanticleer and the dream he related to his loving spouse :

A pair of wild pigeons used to live on a tree in a certain forest. The male dove, while asleep at night, saw in dream that a fowler with a pair of hawks was pursuing them, and that he himself was greatly alarmed. On awaking in the morning, all trembling and distressed, he related the dream to his wife, the female dove. After hearing her husband's story the she-dove said, "Husband, we have no need to fear anything in the world so long as we have harmed no one. Let us rest assured under the care of Heaven since we are innocent creatures." While they were thus chatting together a real hunter appeared with falcons



in his hand. He let loose the hawks after the pigeons, who flew up into the sky. The fowler, impatient to have his prey, shot off two arrows, aiming at the pigeons. But, as it chanced, he slew the two falcons and the arrows falling down again killed the man himself. Thus the doves were saved, and the confidence of the females in the Divine protection was justified.

6. THE CUCKOO

It is curious to find the cuckoo, a bird of evil reputation in Europe, regarded in India as a virtuous creature and even as an injured innocent. Its habit of appropriating the nests of other birds is not recognized, and in the following story the crow is represented as the trespasser :

A crow and a cuckoo had their nests in the same tree. They hatched their own young ones, but the crow slyly took the young ones of the cuckoo and put them in her own nest and her own in that of the cuckoo's. The cuckoo was surprised to find the substitution, and at once demanded her offspring back again. The crow however refused, claiming them as her own, and the dispute could not be settled in any way. The cuckoo had at last to resort to the court of the king of the country. The young ones of both the parties were medically



examined, and it was found that the cuckoo was undoubtedly in the right, and her claim would have been allowed, if the crow had not gone secretly to the Chief Judge and said that if he would give a verdict in his favour she would carry him to heaven on her wings and show him his forefathers. The judge was tempted by this remarkable bribe, and gave sentence in favour of the crow, supporting his judgment by saying that it is no unusual thing for dark-coloured persons to beget children of lighter complexion, and for light complexioned people to have darker offspring. The judge now demanded the fulfilment of the crow's promise. The crow took him on her wings, and conveyed him to a far off region, where he beheld his ancestors gasping and moaning in all the torments of hell. He was beside himself with grief and horror to see them in this plight, and besought them to tell him the reason of their awful condition. The ancestors replied, "Dear descendant, you are the cause of all our trouble. By having given a false verdict you have condemned us all to hell, and on your departure from the world, you also will suffer the same fate." The Judge went away stricken to the heart, and repented to the last day of his life.



The following story combines the frequently occurring type of the fortunate younger son with some suggestions of an Eastern Dick Whittington, and of several other nursery favourites.

7. A WONDERFUL MOUSE

A certain rich banker had four sons by one wife and one by another. After the death of their father the four first-named brothers drove their younger brother from the house and would not allow him any share in the business. When they went to the chase, the younger brother followed them. They killed a deer and carried it home, while he caught and brought in a dove's young ones to serve for soup and meat. But his mother instead of killing them kept and fostered the young doves. Next day when his brothers caught fish he caught a mouse, which also his mother kept as a pet. She seems to have been fond of animals, for she had in addition a cat and a dog which had been driven away by her stepsons on account of some offence, and a crow as well.

The four brothers went to trade in a foreign country. The younger also went on his travels taking with him only his cat. She soon made him rich by bringing him numbers of gold mohars in her mouth from the wealthy houses of the town.



His brothers hearing of his prosperity became jealous, and went to entice the mouse from his house, saying that they wished to have his alliance and help as the most ingenious of the animals. The mouse promised to join them if they would promise to get a buffalo to supply him with milk. They did so. While sucking the milk, the mouse spitefully began biting the udder of the buffalo, which ceased to give milk. The mouse informed the brothers that the buffalo no longer served them, because it had been defiled by their touch and that they must get him another. This they did ; and the mouse partly sucked the milk and wasted the rest. Many other mischievous tricks he played, till at last the four brothers seeing him so hostile drove him away from their house, and set a trap at the door to catch him and kill him if he came back. He was too wise to return, and took up his abode again at the younger brother's house. After this the mother of the younger man addressed the dog, cat, crow, mouse and young doves, saying "My good creatures, I have nourished you like my children all this time, now I am going to have my son married, what help can each of you give for this purpose ? " The mouse said, "I can get as much paddy as you need to feed the guests." The



cat said, "I can supply you with as many gold mohurs as you require for the marriage expenses." The dog said, "I will steal from the bazar all the ghee and treacle-cakes that you need." The crow said, "I will get you a valuable ring for the bride-groom." The dove said, "I cannot supply you with anything, but I can save you if you are threatened by death at any time." So the marriage took place with great splendour. Unfortunately the wedding ring was lost, and no one could tell where it had gone. The four animals met to consider how they should recover the ring. The crow promised to find it wherever it might be, the mouse to snatch it away and the dog to defend it from the attacks of others. After a while the crow discovered the thief, who used to walk about with it on his finger in the daytime and sleep with it in his mouth at night. One night the mouse went and silyly thrust his tail up the nostril of the thief while he was asleep, and in sneezing the man threw out the ring, which was seized by the cat, and the dog running about, bit him. While taking the ring home, the cat saw a piece of meat which tempted him to put the ring on the ground while he ate the juicy morsel. A hawk dashed down and carried it off. But the mouse was equal



to this emergency also. He lay down as if dead, instructing the cat to seize the falcon, when the latter should pounce on him. This was done, and the ring was recovered from the falcon's body. The dog was now entrusted with the ring, but as he was conveying it to his master, he drank in a stream and dropped it to the bottom. They all despaired of recovering it; but the mouse again rose to the occasion. By his instructions they set to work to cut through the bank and turn aside the course of the stream just above the place where the ring had fallen in. The stream below it became dry and the fish began to gasp and die for want of water. One after another was opened, and the ring was at last found and given to their master.

After some time the man fell ill and was summoned to the mansion of the dead by Death's messengers. The mother now begged the dove to redeem her promise. The dove repaired to the kingdom of Death, and arriving at the court of King Yama, sang such a sweet song that the King was pleased and asked what was her request. She begged that the life of her kind master might be spared. The King's Chancellor, after looking into the Book of Destiny, announced that the man's



appointed days were ended and that he must die. Touched by the dove's entreaties, however, King Death prolonged the man's life up to 500 years, and he, his mother and the animals continued long to live in happiness together.

8. THE FOX AND THE PARTRIDGE

A fox entered into friendship with a partridge. Once the fox said he was hungry, and asked for food. The partridge went to the door of a water-mill and fluttered there. The owner of the mill, who was grinding grain, came out to watch her. The partridge took him to a great distance by fluttering before him. The fox ate up the flour of the mill. Then they met again in the jungle. The fox said, "My friend partridge, I have a great hankering for curds." So they came to a cowherd where curds were kept for sale. So he fluttered before the cowherd ; he laid the curd on the ground and went after the partridge, in the meantime the fox ate up the curd. Then the fox said to the partridge, "O friend, make me laugh heartily." Once a great many people were going their ways, so the partridge flew and sat on the head of a man for a second, then on another's, so in this way he fluttered about. Every one gave a stick



to the head on which the partridge sat, and so there was a beating of heads, at which the fox laughed.



CHAPTER V—GHOST AND DEMON LORE

I. THE KAYASTH AND THE DEMON

A CERTAIN Kayasth, who was on his travels in search of a livelihood, arrived at a certain city in the evening. Finding no abode in the city he was told to lodge in a certain deserted house outside the city (supposed to have been haunted by a devil) which had been deserted by its owners. The traveller ignorant of what had caused the house to be deserted, went and occupied it. As soon as he had prepared some victuals, including strong drink for himself in the night, a demon of hideous form and features appeared before him, expressing his hunger. The poor Kayasth being already frightened with his terrible form and stature, could not but place the whole of his food before him. He devoured it all with immense relish and satisfaction, leaving nothing for the owner. He said to the man, "Friend, what have you come here for?" The man replied, "Sir, I have come here seeking employment." The demon said, "You had better stay on here for the present and prepare food, as nice as you have already done, for me every night. Every morning you will find Rs.2 under yonder lamp. You can purchase necessities with it."



The man continued to feed the *jinn* for years in this way, and sent his savings from the daily allowance to his home. The demon used to appear before him at supper-time in the evening in that house, and then to disappear. The Kayasth having thus found enough for livelihood in the service of the *jinn* cheerfully served him for a very long time. One night he asked permission of the demon to go home. The *jinn* granted it and gave him immense wealth. Besides, he gave the man three hairs out of his moustache and told him that he would come to his help at any time if a little bit of his hair was burnt. So the Kayasth returned to his home. After some time the king of the country was conquered and his country taken by his adversary, and the king took to flight into the forest. The Kayasth hearing of his defeat went to the king and offered his help, but the king laughed at him, considering him to be too inferior for such a difficult task. The poor man instantly put a piece of the hair the *jinn* had given him into the fire, and the demon appeared at that very moment. The man told him about the misfortunes of his king. The *jinn* at once produced lakhs of demons like himself, who drove out the foreign king and disappeared. The king of the country



divided his kingdom into two parts and gave half of it to the Kayasth, as a reward for his services. So the latter was made a king by the help of the ghost.

2. THE PRINCESS AND THE ENCHANTED SWORD

A certain prince went to espouse a beautiful princess. The latter said, "Oh prince, I cannot give you my hand in marriage unless you procure me the beautiful tank, on the bank of which is a terrace paved with copper sheets, silver stairs leading to it, with a gold throne placed in its centre together with a tree with emerald leaves, topaz buds, diamond flowers, pearl fruits, which I saw last night in my dream." The prince immediately repaired to the forest in search of such a scene. After wandering about through various forests and secluded places he at last fortunately saw a dervish in a jungle at evening time. Fearing to approach him, the prince seated himself at a distance, in a secluded corner. But the saint, who had observed him, enquired from him, "What is the object that has brought you into the jungle?" The prince replied, "Sir, I have a great longing to marry a certain princess, but she will not accept my proposal until I secure her the objects of her dream, which



is this: A beautiful tank of crystal water, on the bank of which is built a terrace paved with copper plates, silver stairs leading to it, a gold throne placed on the centre of the terrace, together with a shining tree of emerald leaves, diamond buds, and pearl fruits, which the princess saw in her dream, and she wishes to receive this property from the one who desires her hand. So I have been roving here and there in the jungles for many months in search of such a scene." The sage said, "Dear prince, I can give you a clue to where it is, but it is very difficult for a human being to obtain it, unless he starves for several days and nights previous to going to the place and accomplishing his object. The prince said, "Sir, I am ready to do it at any expense of bodily trouble and mental determination, and will surely act in the way you instruct me." The saint said, "Go to the extreme east with this enchanted sword I give you. You will find the tank there, where you will have to fast for the period I have already prescribed for you. On the eighth day seven fairies will come to bathe in that tank one after another. As soon as the first copper fairy has bathed, behead her with this sword, she will then turn into a copper terrace; the second or the silver fairy will become silver stairs leading to



the copper bank, the third emerald fairy will form an emerald tree, the fourth or the gold fairy will become a throne of gold, the fifth or the topaz fairy its buds, the sixth or the diamond fairy its flowers, the seventh or the pearl fairy its fruits. Be sufficiently firm and bold in the pursuit of your object. I bid you goodbye and wish you success." The prince immediately set out in the direction indicated, and did what was told him to do. When he arrived at the lake, he achieved his purpose by killing the seven fairies one by one. He then brought the princess there, who after seeing all the objects of her dream, became very happy and married the prince.

3. THE PRINCE AND THE DEMON'S DAUGHTER

There lived once a demon in an island beyond the seven oceans. This devil had a beautiful daughter. A certain prince being enamoured of her set out to obtain her. The journey to that place took him six months. On his arrival there he found a large and beautiful city full of gold, silver and precious stones, but devoid of human beings, the inhabitants of this city having all been devoured by the fiend. He saw the damsel sitting near a window of a big palace. No sooner did



the girl see the prince than she advised him to go away at once, and said, "Oh human being, what evil fortune brought you here, only to be devoured by my father who has just gone far off to hunt for human beings and other animals? How will he spare you, who have come to this barren island and fallen into his clutches? He can scent human beings, and walks hundreds of miles in a few strides. So you had better run away with as swift speed as you possibly can." The prince said, "Oh excellent lady, I have come here only for your sake, after undergoing a great many hardships and troubles. I cannot leave you now, whether you kill me yourself or cause me to be eaten by your father." The lady thus touched by the speech of the prince shewed him some gourds provided by the fiend for the protection and defence of his own life. The first contained mist, the second thorns, the third water, the fourth mountains to be placed before one's adversary, and the iron cage in which a parrot was kept, which contained the soul of the demon (i.e. the death and troubles of the bird meant those of the fiend himself). She then instructed him in detail how to kill the devil. No sooner had the prince taken the four gourds in his hand than the devil felt giddy and feverish. Per-



ceiving that an attempt was being made against his life he ran towards his home. The prince dashed down the mist gourd, which made darkness come in his way. Then he broke the thorn gourd, the water gourd, and the mountain gourd one by one. All these threw obstacle after obstacle in his way and greatly impeded his speed towards his home. In spite of all these impediments in his way he continued his journey. When he had come near his home the two legs of the parrot were severed, and the demon became lame. He however dragged his body along to kill his enemy. Just as the demon was close to his antagonist, the latter killed the parrot which caused the death of the demon. After being thus delivered from the demon the prince married the daughter and returned to his home with his bride triumphing in his success and good luck.

4. THE PRINCE AND THE CELESTIAL FLOWERS

A certain king who had already lost his queen was deprived of his kingdom by another potentate. He retreated to the forest with his two sons and resorted to selling firewood in the city for their sustenance. The younger brother finding it too tedious for him to convey wood for sale to the town left his work and went on his travels. He became



servant of a certain banker, assuming the attitude of a dumb man, but doing work like a skilful man. The son of the banker, who knew the daughter of the king of the town, was to elope with her. They had consequently sent on ahead money, jewellery and precious stones laden on ponies. At the moment when the banker's son was to start, the servant had him arrested and locked up by the banker, and with the permission of the banker he rode a pony and went off to seize the riches his son had sent away. Supposing that the banker's son had set out, the princess also started. Both of them arrived in a certain town in the evening. When she saw the dumb man she was afraid of him, but having no one else to help her she made him signs to get lodging and provision, which the dumb man got ready for her to her satisfaction. They both slept together placing a dagger between them as a pledge of chastity. After some days he sent the banker his property and himself became a servant of the king of the city, getting a thousand rupees a day, with the agreement that he should do the work which could not be done by other servants of the king. The high pay he got made him an object of envy to the other servants of the king, and the king, being



influenced by them, ordered the prince one day to bring him the flowers of *parijat*, or the celestial flowers, an impossibility for any human being. After having obtained sentinels to guard his house during his absence, he immediately set out for the purpose. While on his travels he found a deserted town with only one damsel living in it. He made acquaintance with her and played *chauparh* with her for some time. In the evening she told him to go away from her house, for, if not, her father, a demon, would devour him. The prince said that he could not part with her for any amount of danger to his life. So she changed him into a fly. When the demon came he cried out, "Human scent, human scent." The girl said all the people had already been eaten by him with the exception of herself. The next day when the fiend had gone hunting, she changed the prince again into a man. In this way they enjoyed each other's company not for days only but for months. One day the prince requested the woman to get either her father or himself killed. She said she would get rid of her father, the devil. In the night when the demon came she complained to him and said, "O, father, I am very anxious nowadays for you, since your own brother in disguise, I hear, has come here



to kill you. How can you defend yourself against his attacks." The demon replied, "My dear daughter, do not be afraid for my life, I cannot be killed by any one in the world. For my soul is secure in the body of a beetle, which is again secure in the body of a parrot, which is kept within the iron-barred cage. This cage is secured again in the innermost room, there being six outer rooms duly padlocked, leading to it. The keys of all these locks are with me. The girl eagerly asked the demon further, "You are likely to lose the keys; so will you kindly leave the keys in my care for my peace of mind?" The fiend acceded to her wish and gave her the keys. The girl again said, "Father, my eyes are always looking for your coming home; will you kindly tie a bell to your neck so that I may hear the ringing of it when you approach home, for my comfort?; otherwise, my mind is always uneasy for your sake." The demon immediately complied with her request, by putting on a bell round his neck, and started to hunt human beings for his food. The very next day as soon as she opened the first room, the demon felt feverish; on unlocking the second room he had a high fever; finding that he had been deceived by his daughter, he ran towards home, but in the



interval all the rooms were opened and the parrot and the beetle were killed. The demon died. The prince married the girl, who wished him to take her home, but the prince said, "My darling, I have to fulfill another promise to the king (whose servant I am) of bringing him the celestial flowers; so you must remain here comforted and guarded by servants, until I can produce the flowers before my king." His wife said, "Very well, you are at liberty to do so, but go to the remotest jungles which are generally inhabited by ascetics, who alone are able to give you instructions as to how and where the flowers are to be obtained." So the prince went to the jungles. He met with a Fakir to whom he represented his need. The ascetic told him that the flowers were either to be had in the heavens or in the world under the earth. He advised him to continue his journey onward. The prince did so and came across another ascetic, who advised him also to go on to gain his purpose. Then he met with a third dervish who told him that on a certain night all the heavenly gods and fairies descend at a certain place on the earth, where they dance to the tune of a flute during the night, and whenever the flute is blown the fairies dance and the celestial flowers fall down on them.



They disappear next morning. So you must go there and take courage and use the opportunity to bring in as many flowers as you like. The prince accordingly got to the place on that night and saw the show. The celestial beings disappeared as soon as the day broke and left the flute there. The prince, instead of bringing the flowers he wanted, took up the flute (the chief source of the spectacle and phenomenon, and also the flowers which the tune of the flute produced), and brought it to the third or the last Fakir, and produced the entertainment afresh. The ascetic expressed a desire to receive the wonderful flute from the prince, who agreed to part with it on receiving in return the self-striking club, and the self-binding rope from the Fakir. Both agreed to the conditions. So the prince returned, after having given the flute to the dervish. While on his way he commanded the club and the rope to beat and bind the Fakir, and to take back his flute. They did it. He arrived at the hut of the second dervish and showed him the flute and its manner of working. The latter was so enchanted with the flute that he asked for it in exchange for the self-cooking vessel and self-distributing provision spoon which he had. The prince having bartered his flute for the vessel and



the spoon, resumed his way. Again he ordered the club and the rope to bring his flute back, the next moment he saw his own order complied with, and the flute placed before him. Then he started and met with the first dervish and showed him the flute and related the way in which he had obtained it. This Fakir also wanted it in return for the self-flying bed he had. The prince readily agreed to the bargain, and gave him the flute. As soon as he had left the place, mounting the self-flying bed he ordered his club and rope to get his flute back, and his command was instantly obeyed. Thence he went to the daughter of the demon, and placing her and himself together with all the riches of the deserted town on the flying bed, reached the destination of the king, who had sent him for the celestial flowers. There he arranged to show the display one night. No sooner had he tuned the flute than the fairies appeared, and danced so bewitchingly that the celestial flowers poured down on them in the presence of the king and his courtiers. The king and his retinue were so fascinated with the extraordinary and amazing scene that the whole assembly heartily thanked and congratulated him on his supernatural achievement of his purpose. The flowers thus produced were



collected by the order of the king. After this the prince invited the king and his courtiers to his own lodging, told them that he was a prince, and that he had taken service on account of his poverty. After having feasted them he begged leave from the king to return to his own country. Next day he rode the flying bed with the two maidens and his riches, and arrived in his own country. After having conquered the foreign king with the club and rope, he put his elder brother on the throne: himself serving as a minister to him. He married the daughter of the king he had brought with him, to his elder brother, the king, and he himself married the daughter of the demon who was trained in a hundred and eight arts.

5. THE GHOST AND THE SICK MAN

Some years ago a post peon arrived at a house at night. On entering it he found a sick man lying on his bed with no one else in the house. The sick man welcomed the peon and said that he should stay there and get his food, pointing out the baskets of rice and flour, the vessels and ghee as well. The peon having kindled fire began to cook his food, doing everything himself. The peon forgot to take salt for his food with him to the kitchen. (It is forbidden to a Hindu, in the



Kumaon hills, to go out of the kitchen when the victuals are being cooked, unless he has partaken of them.) So the peon expressed his regret to the sick man that he had not taken salt with him for the food. On this the sick man pointed out the vessel of salt, hanging to one of the beams of the house, about 10 or 12 yards off from the bed, at the same time he stretched forth his hand to the beam to reach the salt. This extraordinary scene so terrified the peon that he at once quitted the place naked, leaving his clothes and badge, and ran for shelter to another village. The sick man pursued him for some distance. The peon reached another village with great fatigue and exhaustion at midnight. There he was told that all the inmates of the house had died of some epidemic contagious disease. All of them were burnt by the surviving members of the family, but the one who died last was not taken away by any one to be burnt. Everybody was afraid to approach the house. Next day, when the peon, in company of many of the villagers, went there to take his badge and clothes, they found the dead body lying in the bed, and they also noticed that flowers of mustard were sticking between its toes, as it had chased the peon through the mustard fields. They then



concluded that some ghost had entered the dead body to frighten the peon.

6. THE GHOST AND THE FIREWOOD

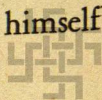
Once a traveller arrived in the evening at a place near a burning ghat where he collected some pieces of firewood (remnants of the funeral pyre) on the bank of a river for his own use. He kindled a fire and cooked his food on it. After getting his food he slept near the fire. At midnight a number of ghosts came to him, each of them crying, "Give me my fuel, give me my fuel." He was frightened at the sight, and ran away to a neighbouring village, leaving all the wood and fire. [The remaining wood of the funeral fire is considered to be the property of the dead men (ghosts). The approach to such wood is dreaded.]

7. A MAGICAL CONTEST

A certain Brahman, having no children, went to a Jogi (ascetic) and implored him to bless him with progeny. The latter, after giving him some wonderful medicinal root, claimed the first-born for his disciple. The Brahman agreed to fulfil the condition, as soon as he was given the sons so promised. The Jogi then departed. The man in due time got two sons who grew to manhood. The



same Jogi came to the man and asked for the elder son, who was readily given him. But the man requested the ascetic to take his younger son also for a training under him. The latter granted his request. So the Jogi took both the sons of the man with him, and instead of teaching his art to both alike excluded the younger from the boon, and began to train the elder one, supposing him to be his own disciple, inside a room, which was shut against the younger one. But the latter, being smart and inquisitive, gave his ears and mind to what was taught inside to his brother, by stealthily standing close to the door, which was shut, and attentively hearing what was taught to his brother inside. Once the Fakir gave each a wooden bowl to be oiled. The elder one begged oil and clarified butter from door to door, for the purpose and got it a little oiled; but the younger one, on the contrary, contrived a better plan for so doing. He purchased bowlful of oil on credit, and returned it next day on the plea of its being of a bad quality and so got his bowl fully greased in the process. Finding the younger one more ingenious than the other, the ascetic drove him from his house. The younger lad came to his father and told him that he would metamorphose himself



into a nice mare which he would sell to any one for Rs. 500 but he should not part with the bridle, otherwise he would come to great troubles. When the boy had transformed himself into a mare, his father took him to market for sale. The very same ascetic, who knew him to be the boy, purchased it. He made it over to his disciple (the elder brother) with instructions that she should get fodder and water at home, that is not be taken out for the purpose. The disciple acted on the advice of his tutor for a considerable time. One day it so happened that the disciple of the ascetic, forgetting the counsel of his instructor, took the mare to a river, so that she might drink water. No sooner had the mare touched the water of the river than she disappeared, turning into a fish. On hearing this from his follower the ascetic assumed the form of a fisherman, to catch the counterfeited fish. When the fisherman was about to catch the fish, it turned itself into a bee, the fisherman became a hornet to kill it. The bee then transformed itself into one of the pearls in the wreath worn by the daughter of the king of the country. On feeling some sensation, the princess threw off her garland on the pavement of her palace. No sooner was this done than the ascetic



having metamorphosed himself into a cock began to eat up the scattered pearls (with a view to kill the boy). Just before the boy was about to be devoured by his adversary he transformed himself into a cat, and killed the cock, his enemy.

8. THE GHOST AND THE FOUR WOMEN

There was once a well-to-do man in a certain village. One night a stray hunting party of a king reached the village in a tired condition. They were well fed and taken care of by the man that night. Next morning they joined the king. On inquiring about the events of the past night they related the hospitality of the man to the king. The iniquitous ruler, instead of recognizing the goodness of the man, was led by their report to covet his wealth. He directed his servants to plunder him of his wealth. The party accordingly did so. The inmates of the house, the old man and his wife, the four sons and their wives, left the house for good, with hardly anything in their possession to live on. But the wife of the youngest son had concealed sixteen gold mohars on her person. When they felt hungry, the woman gave her father-in-law one gold mohar to purchase food with. The old man went off with it and never



returned. So she was obliged to give another mohar to her mother-in-law for the same purpose. She also acted in the same way. Then each of the four sons was charged with a mohar to buy food for the family. But they also eloped in a similar way. The four young women, thus left alone, set to work with the money they had got in their possession. First of all they purchased male apparel for themselves and wore it with great turbans on their heads to hide their braided hair. They then accepted service in the court of the same king, and appeared as tidy and energetic young men, worthy of service in every way. They served the king for a considerable time without the least suspicion on the part of the other six. One night on the death of the only son of the king, they were ordered to take the dead body to the funeral *ghat* (spot where dead bodies used to be burnt) to be burnt. They took the body instantly to the place in spite of the widespread fear of a certain ghost said to appear at night and to frighten to death those who by ill chance went there. No sooner did they arrive there than a ghost with horrible features appeared before them. One of them clung to him undauntedly taking hold firmly of his matted hair. After an obstinate fight the evil



spirit at last yielded to them. They would not set him free unless he would give them a promise to effect whatever they wanted from him. Being so constrained, he pledged his word to accomplish whatever they required from him. On these conditions he was let loose. First of all they ordered him to make the dead body of the prince alive. He did this, and the son of the king was restored to life. The next thing they wanted of him was to revive all the dead bodies burnt there during the last hundred years. He effected this also. Then he was ordered to build buildings and furnish them for the accommodation of those thus revived. This was instantly done. As the four disguised women did not go back the same night, the king sent his servants next morning to look after them. They saw the prince alive and the other wonderful things effected. They at once went to the sovereign with the glad tidings. But the ruler, not believing at all what they had said, came himself there out of curiosity and found his only son alive, to his unbounded joy. In return for which he gladly shared half of his kingdom with the four pretended men. (Evil spirits are believed to possess supernatural powers.)



9. THE DEAD MAN WHO MOVED AND TALKED

Once upon a time a certain man and his wife lived in a house in the midst of a dense forest together with their cattle. The man fell ill and died at night. The next morning a relative of his came to inquire after his health, and as soon as he had arrived the dead man began to move and talk. The wife of the deceased, who had found him quite dead in the night was happy to see him alive on the arrival of her kinsman. She said with folded hands, "Dear kinsman, I have no proper words to thank you for the recovery of my husband, who was perfectly dead in the night, but no sooner have you arrived and felt his pulse than he has become convalescent. So you are the sole cause of a new life being given him." Her relative was also delighted to find him alive, and congratulated her on her good luck. The woman then asked her kinsman what food she might prepare for him. The dead man, now possessed of his senses and lying in his bed, before her query was answered, interposed, and said, "I and my kinsman will not take our meal now, but at night together (with the evident view to prevent his departure from the place after eating as generally was the case). You must go today to a neighbour-



ing village to invite the people here tomorrow morning, as I wish to see them on account of the joy I feel at my recovery." So she went away as directed, to bring the neighbours (meaning to burn the dead body). They ate nothing during the day but in the evening, the dead man (ghost) told him (the kinsman) to prepare food. He did so. While so employed in the kitchen he wanted salt and expressed his wish. The dead man then stretched forth his hand to a place (where salt was kept) five yards distant from his bed in order to fetch the salt for him. This supernatural conduct of the ghost so frightened the man that he ran away for fear, and the ghost pursued him until the man embraced a cow tightly in the cowshed for fear of him. (The theory is that the cow being very holy the ghosts and demons fear to approach it.) On the withdrawal of the ghost the man ran home with his wife. The next morning when the wife of the deceased brought the neighbours to her home, they found the man dead. So the dead body was burnt by them.

10. A GHOST IN A MILL

A man once at night was in a water-mill shed, on the bank of a certain river, which was used as a burning *ghat* (place where dead bodies are burnt)



by the people of the neighbourhood. While his grain was in the process of being ground in the mill, it stopped of a sudden. On coming out he found that the water which ran through the channel to work the mill was directed into the river by the breaking up of the dam. So he shut up the dam again and got the mill moving as before. It was nearly midnight when a ghost, assuming the appearance of a man, entered the shed, and asked the man, "Do you like to eat flesh?" The man replied in the affirmative, but at the same time believed him to be nothing but a ghost. No sooner did the ghost leave the shed to bring flesh for the man than the latter, all shivering with fear, ran away to his village, leaving his corn behind in the mill. The ghost ran after him with the leg of a human being (the flesh he had promised to bring); saying repeatedly in a loud voice, "He was just here, where is he gone to?, he was just here, where is he gone to?" The ghost pursued him to his own village, but could not enter his house. He went with others next morning to the water-mill to bring his grain during the day time, for he was so terrified at the scene of the past night that he dared not go there alone.



11. THE GHOST AND HIS SON

A certain man died and left an only son of 10 or 12 years old. When the said body was being taken to the burning *ghat* to be burnt, the boy insisted on accompanying his father, but the other people and his mother prevented his doing so. But he stealthily went to a ridge from which he saw the site where his deceased father was burnt. Supposing that his father was made to reside there (at the funeral pyre) he began to go there at night addressing him repeatedly, "Father, father," quite unconscious of his father having been a ghost, but to no purpose. One night while doing so the boy saw his father (a ghost in the exact appearance of his father) whom he embraced believing him to be his own father, and told him that while at home he used to feed him well with ghee and milk, and now he got nothing of the sort since he (his father) had left him. On this the ghost pointed out the ruin of a certain house in the neighbourhood to the boy, and told him that he should dig there and appropriate the riches it contained. He accordingly razed the wall of the ruin and found a jar of money under it. The ghost never appeared to the boy again.



12. A GIRL AND HER SNAKE HUSBAND

A man had a wife. The man was angry with her. He said to himself, "I can get 2 slabs of stone by breaking it, but cannot get anything from my wife; she is foolish and useless." Thinking this he drove her away. After she had been driven away she went to a field and began to live there and supported herself by begging alms. One day she found a small thing (stick like snake). She kept it, put it in a basket and on the next day she saw it was filled with the snake. Then she put it in a larger basket. The next day it had again filled the basket. Afterwards she went to her husband's house and began to live unknown to the husband. She put the snake into a barn (*bhakar*). Next day she saw that it was also filled. Her husband knew that she had come back through his servant. He also took no care of her. He forgot all about her doings, forgot that he had driven her away and let her stay. She told her husband she had borne a son; she required, she said, a house to keep it in. He got a house of three storeys built and she put the serpent there. Next day it filled the three storeyed house. Now the serpent placed his head on the threshold and entirely filled the three storeys. The woman told her husband that her



bodice of the mother-in-law and slept with him. The snake man rose from sleep and could not find the skin. She said she did not know who had taken his outer skin and her bodice. While she went to her mother-in-law and told her with joy that the son was man and took her to see him. He was now in the form of a man and could not change to a snake. The mother was now very happy.

(A treasure buried in the ground becomes a snake, and that snake if kept by human beings turns into a man.)

13. THE BOY AND THE DEMONESS

A person was taking 15 goats to his home. He met with a demoness (Rakshasii) on the road. She followed him like a country woman or villager. In the evening they lodged on the road. They both ate their food and the person tied his goats and went to sleep. When the man was asleep, the woman devoured two goats. Now he had 13 left. On getting up early in the morning, seeing two goats less, he was perplexed. He could not find out about them. When the demoness was asked what had become of the goats, she told him that she did not know. "You and I both slept. I don't know who has taken away the goats."



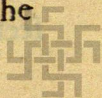
Afterwards he went towards his home. Again the woman followed him. In the way they again lodged by the road. The second night she devoured four goats. Now he had nine left. When she was asked she made the same reply. In this way she devoured all the goats. One day, the demoness in the shape of a country wife hid herself. On the second day, she appeared in a beautiful disguise of a 15 years' old girl and came forward. He imagined her to be very beautiful. He told her he wanted to marry her. She agreed. He took her home. He reached home. He had four more wives in his house. When night came they all went to sleep, she devoured one of the four. On the second night she devoured the second, on the third the third. On the fourth night it was the turn of the fourth. The fourth wife who was pregnant went away with his son of 14 years to a neighbouring house. Taking rest for some hours she told her son, "The new wife of your father has devoured all your step-mothers. Now we must consider a place. When I tell my husband, he, instead of killing her, will rebuke and kill me, and she will not be injured by him." Afterwards the son went on thinking of a place for getting rid of the new wife. He went to the



bazar and met with an old woman who used to wipe the blood off the demoness' mouth. The boy told the old woman he would give a gold mohar if she could ask the demoness where her soul lived. The old woman was an intimate friend of the demoness and the demoness used to come to her daily, and the old woman used to kill lice on her head and wipe the blood from her mouth. The boy went to his mother and told her that he had begun to make a plan for killing the demoness. On the second day the old woman asked her (the demoness), when she came to her as usual, where her soul lived. She replied, "I am the daughter of a distinguished demon (Rakshash) and my soul lives across the seven oceans. There is a large peepul tree which has spread its branches long and which is a rest for travellers. In those branches many parrots live. On the top of that tree is a nest and there is a large parrot in which my soul lives." Next day when the boy came to the old woman, he asked her if she had inquired about the demoness' soul. The old woman told him that she had asked, "If you give me two gold mohars, I will show you." The boy gave her two gold mohars and was told by her the secret. Now the boy went home and began to think how he should manage



to go across the seven oceans. He again returned to the old woman and asked her to inquire from the demoness how he was to cross them. On the second day when the demoness came to the old woman and she was wiping her bloody mouth and killing lice began to tell her to be careful and not loose the thing by which the ocean is crossed. The demoness fell into the trap and told her that she had a sandal (of one foot) which was kept in a box under her bed (which she had brought with her). But said she, "Don't tell anyone. I have told you these as my close friend. You must conceal all this as you have concealed my eating men and animals." There in the man's (her husband's) house, the demoness ate all the horses and cattle and injured some of the suburbs of the city. When the demoness had gone the boy came hiding (slyly) and asked the old woman if she had inquired from the demoness. The old woman said, "Yes. I require 4 gold mohars from you for telling the secret." He gave her 4 gold mohars. Then she informed him about the sandal under her bed in a box in her chamber. The boy returned home thoughtfully. He did not tell anything to his mother. In the night he disguised himself as a faqir, and went to his father's house, where she



lived. He told the people that he wanted alms. The demoness came and brought some flour meal to give him. The faqir told her that he did not want the flour. He wants to see the owner of the house. Then hearing this from the upper house the father came downstairs and asked him what he wanted. He replied that he required a night's lodging in the room next to his own, and gave him fuel for burning. He lit a fire and when he was given food he ate heartily. At two o'clock in the morning, he prayed, "If I had right in this house, a stone of this wall will slide away and there will be a hole." According to his words the stone went aside and there was a hole. He went through the hole secretly to the next room, where his father and step-mother were lying. He took away the trunk under the bed and came back through the hole. Again putting the trunk into fire (to open it) he took out the sandal and again restored the trunk and came back and smoked tobacco, knowing that there would be questioning about the hole. He prayed it might be closed if he had any right in that house. The hole became as before; and at 4 o'clock he went towards the seven oceans. He applied the sandal on one of his feet and by its help crossed the seven oceans in a



moment. At 6 o'clock he was by the peepul tree and saw many parrots there. On the top he saw the large parrot sitting. He had taken a sword with him before crossing the ocean. Slowly he climbed up the tree and prayed to God that the life of that parrot would not be taken from her, but it would fall down. He at once darted on the parrot, and hit it with his sword and cut the parrot's feet and wings. The pain of the parrot soon affected the demoness there. She began to die. He took the parrot still alive with him and crossed the seven oceans and appeared before his father and told him all that had happened. He was much praised by his father and country men. The demoness came out and asked him, "What is this?" Showing her the parrot she replied, "This is my life. Don't kill it any more. I will give you many lakhs of rupees from my father's house." The boy refused and before all the people and before his father and mother he killed the parrot and the demoness thereupon died.

